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# UNBORN SON

*By the same Author*

KONYETZ. 1924

SIX PRISONS AND TWO REVOLUTIONS. 1925

SOCIALISM AND THE BIBLE. 1928

*(Translated from the French)*

CONSERVATISM AND WEALTH. 1929

*(With R. Chance)*

THE QUESTING BEAST. 1932

# UNBORN SON

BY

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MAYFAIR LONDON



## PREFACE

SON, this is for you. In it I have put things as simply as I can; things that might worry or disturb you as you pass through this life.

If I have been assertive, it will be with reason.

If I have been sentimental, it is my failing.

If I have been unkind, I deserve no forgiveness.

As I felt I have written. If you and your generation can benefit by one grain of what I have sown I am content. If my opinions move you to discussion and friendly argument, I am pleased.

It has been a labour of love—all, that is, save the very end, and I beg you not to read that till you have digested the rest.

O. B.



## CHAPTER ONE

Which is about you and why you were wanted—Of parents in general—Wherein we first meet Mr. Fear—Of the chemical body and the spiritual soul—Duty of parents—Of why people have not so many children as formerly—Of how you were born—Of this pendulum business—Of making people unhappy—Of your generation—Of this book.

You are sixteen now, and all sorts of things are happening to you. You are beginning to feel things deeply, and everything that you come in contact with, and much that is around you of which you are not conscious, is battering you or stroking you or calling you. It is because I have watched you so carefully all these years that I am writing this book, for I feel that you are ready to receive it, and that you will understand why I speak to you in this way. When you are my age you may write a similar book for your son, and your book will either be better and nobler, or else I have failed and my life has been useless. When you have read it through you will come and talk to me about it, and say where I am wrong, and where I have been unkind, and I shall listen to you as I always have, and shall respect your soul the more, as I have taught you to; for the human Soul is the one great lovely thing God has given us, and It is His and we are only Its guardian. When It touches the fringe of thought and all consciousness, then It is to be treated with reverence, and when you criticize me on the basis of things spiritual, then



your opinions are sacred and I am bound to respect them. Let me know as soon as you have read my book, and I will come over to Rennes, and we'll have a drink in one of those little cafés off the Place d'Armes—probably the little one where we sat so long in silence on the day when I took you to the *lycée* for your first term, nearly three years ago. Much water has flowed under the bridge since then, and your letters have shown me that my teaching has not been in vain.

Spring in Brittany is always lovely, yet here in Oxfordshire we have nothing to grumble about. The wistaria is out in the conservatory, and its scent always amazes me with its strength and sweetness. The almonds are blossoming, but your own little cherry tree is rather like you, somewhat uncertain as to whether to shout with joy and show itself, or to keep quite still and wait for even warmer times. I am having the old boat mended for you so that you can go on what you used to call " 'splorations." The wild duck has got a nest somewhere, but we haven't been able to find it yet. I am expecting any day to see the old girl coming for her food, leading a new family. Do you get out into the Brittany countryside, or do they still keep you too tied to your work? When you write your first book, which I suppose will be something to do with Buddhism (unless you have gone on to something else by then), you will learn that the most difficult part of writing is the first chapter, and you will stagger and rush and mark time and pant until the story opens, and then nothing can stop you, not even meal times or the call from the garden from your old friend Ernest: "Master John, Master John, the peacock's got his tail up." Or perhaps you have forgotten how insistent you used to be that you should be called whenever such beauty was to be

seen. Do you remember what you said when you first saw Zeus shivering under the weight of his emotion—and his tail? You looked for a long time and then, turning to me, you said: “It’s like God’s fan”—and I told you I thought so too. I think you were four, because it was in the reign of Zeus I, and now we have Zeus III on the peacock throne. But I must not be reminiscent about you, although birthday-time is apt to encourage it. We have more serious things to do than that, and if you find me wandering back, you must pull me up even though you read this too late. I think, however, I can conjure your presence to me in order to prevent such reactionary behaviour.

You asked me in your last and most rambling letter—the one that was full of scattered accents, by which I mean you haven’t yet grasped the difference in sound between the “circumflex” and the “grave”—why parents ever want children; and as I am always frank with you, we can start with this as a fairly good basis for the series of assertions, assumptions and theories that I intend to make to you now that the chrysalis is breaking, and the insect is looking around and wondering what it is all about.

The desire for children, son, can be twofold. It can be the love feeling that wants to rid itself of some creation which shall embody the expression of the two lovers—male and female—in one whole. I say “rid itself” because the urge is always beating at the heart of folks who are happily united. On the other hand, it can be the purely selfish love of possession and the procreation of one’s own self. Of course, in this case, God always has the laugh on His side, for all that parents can do is merely to make a chemical mixture, and that which makes the child a joy or a sorrow is God’s own private injection—the soul force.

In both instances, however, the urge is fairly selfish, and in mine more so than in some.

I wanted clay that I could fashion, and I thought that if my clay and your mother's clay were mixed together it would be good clay to model with. I never kept this urge of mine from you; I told you that you were an experiment and you did not mind, because, as you said at the time, I had good hands. The people who ought never to have children are those whose act of procreation is accidental or casual, or for whom the act is physically repugnant. In the latter case the harm done to children is immense, as this loathing sets up glandular emotion in the mother, and her children are never attached to her in after life, or indeed ever hold permanent affection of a deep-rooted nature. Now you will be asking if this is an assertion, assumption or paternal theory. I reply that it is an assertion made from study and experience. But you are right to question it, as you are to examine everything else that does not fit your own life theory. Some people assert that parents who are not fond of children as children, should not be parents. I do not think that matters so much, provided that there is mutual love and no physical repugnance, for the influence of parents in the early days is not remembered, nor does it affect the child unless there has been cruelty or injustice in their parental dealing. I have known some parents literally frightened of children as a species; being afraid, probably, of responsibility and of answering questions. There are the parents who lie to their children, and, incidentally, although they do not realize it, lie to themselves. These parents live in a false world and blame their children instead of themselves. Their control of child life is based on avoiding trouble by bringing in a helper in the form of a

very unpleasant and dangerous individual that you and I call Mr. Fear. He passes under many names. In my childhood Mr. Fear was President Krüger. During the first world war he was the German Kaiser to us over here, and to the working classes he is generally a policeman. "Don't do that, or I'll give you to the copper." "Keep quiet, or the Kaiser'll come and fetch you," and even, again in my own childhood, "Go to sleep quickly, or the bogey man will get you." There was even a song about that Mr. Fear, and you and I know that neither of us would think of closing our eyes if we thought a "bogey man" were coming to take us away. We are curious about Mr. Fear, but you have never met him yet, and are never going to until we have locked him up in a cage for ever, and that will be the millenium.

Because the child's body is made of chemical substances; because it is composed of atoms, which, before long, will be broken up and made to disappear with amusing or disastrous results to the subject and the operator; because its brain is also chemical: in so much it is the product of the action of its parents when they created it. But the body is not the whole child. It is the visible child, the thing that receives the physical blows or the physical kisses. It can be a joy to the beholders or a sorrow; whichever it may become, it is not the child's fault. One day we shall know what divisible part of the amœba produces what physical propensities, and what one kind of potential physical propensity, when united with other propensities in the female, produces what actual physical propensity in the finished product. It is the thing invisible which you and I love in mankind, although, indeed, physical beauty attracts greatly. That thing invisible is the "Divine Spark," the

individual's Ego, the soul. This—this thing is sacred. It can never do wrong. It starts in life as the physical body to which It is allied starts, tiny, weak, undeveloped. It is set on the right track, on the track of love, and It never leaves it. All round are forces that hem It in—cruelties and greed and materialism; and these things are so great that they cover the soul up and no one can see It, not even the guardians of that soul. Our duty in life is to clear away those things and let the soul shine forth. We can't kill It; we can only hide It. It is because I feel this so deeply to be true that of all the many clichés with which life is surrounded, the one of "duty to one's parents" is to me the most blasphemous. It is the cry of the coward parent, of the physical parent, of the possessive parent. It is the desire for something to be dependent on one, the pride of possession. You did not ask to be born. I did not take you from miserable surroundings and make you mine. You are not mine. I made, with your mother, your chemical body because I wanted you and I was not averse to the act of procreation. Those are the two reasons you are here, and the only two. You were born. You became a living creature, and the only duty there is about it is my duty to you until you are moulded and ready for exhibition—which will be very soon now. How can you owe a duty to me? Owe me love, understanding and sympathy, if you can, but nothing more. Your soul is individual. You are the guardian. You cannot owe It, and this duty business is one long bluff that kills individuality and flatters parental position. It is always used to stop children asking how they were born, because some parents think it all rather a nasty business and that the child should be grateful to the parents because of what

they went through during this nasty business, for their own satisfaction, of course. A parent who uses that duty argument is lying to himself. He wants to make the child share his responsibility. He has no spiritual basis of life. He is a materialist with neither scientific nor ethical knowledge in his possession. You live because your mother and I made you healthily according to an apparently good chemical formula, and God was pleased enough with our part of it to breathe into you. Your job is to breathe out with increase and not to stop until you have nothing more to give forth. You will go through chokings and spasms of different sorts, of course, but that is because something else has gone wrong.

To-day there are not quite so many children born as usual, except among the working classes, and that is not their fault. They have so many more physical temptations owing to their housing conditions. They have so little knowledge of birth or death. They only know life, and that is more cruel to them than to their more fortunate brothers. There are three reasons why people do not have so many children as formerly. Firstly, they cannot afford the upbringing, owing to the insecurity of the industrial system. Secondly, they have learned that actual physical contact between wife and husband can give pleasure without inconvenience; and thirdly, modern hygiene and a little common sense has taught married couples the stupidity of sleeping in one bed the whole night through. Proximity during sleep for two tired bodies inevitably leads to the more feminine nature drawing nervous force from the more masculine. Notice that I say "nature" and not merely "feminine," for, as you know, great as the difference is between male and female physically, the feminine nature

and the masculine nature are greater in difference and are not necessarily dependent on physical attributes. No, son, the struggle for food to-day has done more to kill child-bearing than anything else, at any rate among the middle classes. The upper classes only want a name carried on, and the social whirl of futility is sufficient excuse for not having children without bothering to go into the pros and cons. The poor, whose main idea in having children is that they may bring a little extra money into the house when they leave school, have had a nasty shock during the past twelve years. The jobs are not there, and that realization, when it does sink in, may have some effect. But they have little time for thought. The system is too hard. Nine-tenths of the population only think when they are frightened, and then only on the lines dictated by Mr. Fear. Consequently their best time for thought is on their death-beds, and then it is too late. At the moment it seems that Aldous Huxley's conception of "Brave New World" need not be as remote a possibility as it appears to be at first. People will eventually realize that the breeding of dogs and race-horses need not be more carefully carried out than the breeding of humans, and then the chemical body that is visual will come into competition with the invisible one. Cause and effect (about which I should like a treatise from you, by the way—only you won't have time yet a while) are vitally important in any knowledge of children from their earliest years. We parents never realize sufficiently how strong physical and psychical atmosphere is. Your mother and I were firm believers in the importance of pre-natal influence; we believed that passions such as fear, sexual repugnance, nervous irritation, mental tiredness and internal illness should be absent from us while we started to create your

body, and we certainly trained ourselves with success as far as our personal relationship and physical health went. We did not make the mistake of both wanting a boy or both wanting a girl: that is dangerous for the child's sexual complexes. I wanted a boy and your mother wanted a girl, and she and I worked out on paper the finest qualities we could think of and concentrated on them. Then we gave that up. Your mother had more time for concentration at that time than I had. We saw beautiful things together and we sought out ugliness together, for I wanted us to be happy over the one and sympathetic and gentle over the other. I will tell you about those expeditions of ours when I come to talk to you of your mother, since you were only four when she died and can have only a hazy recollection of her, though you always insist you remember her laugh—as indeed you might, for it was a joyous sound and meant more to me than you can imagine.

As soon as you first saw the light of this earth I was only concerned with three things—that you should never meet Mr. Fear and always laugh at even your conception of him. That is why I drew so many pictures of Mr. Fear for you. The second was that I should never lie to you, and the third that you should trust me implicitly. Your second head master once told me that he was afraid you were rather cowardly. I asked him to explain, and he mentioned that in some paper-chase or other most of the boys had jumped a gate and that you had opened it and run through it. I am afraid I told the worthy man that I could not possibly see the point in a bad jumper attempting a jump that was too high and might result in serious consequences, and that I considered your action extremely sensible. I do not think he agreed. You see, son, we



both had different opinions. He thinks his is right: I think mine. That is as it should be, and the opinions of others are valuable—but *only* when those opinions have been thought out. That is the difference and the only excuse for argument.

Every action produces reaction. That is the sort of definite saying that you and I rather dislike, but work it out—mathematically, chemically, biologically and in personal relationships. It is a point that makes people apt to think life futile. If our actions and reactions were all on one dead level I could agree, but, reading my history and remembering my own experiences and those of my contemporaries, I look upon this pendulum business as a to and fro motion working in an upward spiral. Perhaps, son, that is just the one thing I allow myself to believe in, rather than despair of mankind's upward march. I do believe that it is an upward march, and that knowledge and experiment are good things. One of my main reasons in writing this book is that I want you to start where I leave off. I want you always to be more advanced than I: advanced in ideals, in knowledge, in politics, in literature, in public speaking, in music, in painting, and all the things that I have touched at any time of my life, and I shall only disagree with you when you start persecuting minorities and forbidding further knowledge and making intelligent people unhappy. You can't make fools unhappy: you can only make them more happy, and that by bringing yourself to their own level, not by condescension, but by appreciating that they too have that which is divine in them, and it is your duty if you are in It's company, to greet It and show that you know It is there. And, of course, it is very difficult; you will strain fearfully and be tired afterwards,

but you have cleared away something like a veil from the shining surface of your own soul, and I shall see it blazing with a big light, and shall say: "Please, God, don't let me be too proud." So you see, I think all good things of you, and look to you and your generation to be better and nobler than we are. You have a sorry mess to clear up. My generation has not been very good at clearing up, but then, you know, we were tired out before our time: we were made dumb by the horror of our youth and early manhood: we were the sacrifice to the greed and evil of preceding generations. In this book I shall tell you of something which was done to us, and I swear before you now that I shall do all I can to save you from a similar fate, even to the extent of getting myself shot for it: not so much—and do not think it for a moment—because you are my son and I do not want you killed in a war, but because war is evil and affects all people's sons who are connected with it. I shall tell you also of your own childhood, and of why I am educating you as I am and not like other English boys of your class. I shall tell you how I hope to finish off that education, and of sex, and why the world is in the mess it is. . . . I shall talk to you of war and peace and religion: of your mother, of the philosophies of life, and of your future profession—whatever that may be. . . . Of the arts, and of music, the greatest of those arts. Then you will disagree, and you will be right; for greatness is only the individual's conception, as all things are relative to the individual, or the circumstance, or the time or place. So we have a great deal to talk about and much to think about.

I hear good Gwen saying dinner is ready, and I shall go down and sit facing your empty chair; but I shall not be lonely, and you know why.

## CHAPTER TWO

How the classes bring up their children—Of your childhood—Sidi Maklouf's explanation of birth—Of God—First church-going—Of religion—More about Mr. Fear—Of fairy-tales—French literature—Other children—Possessiveness—Of relying on yourself.

THE children of our country, son, are not all brought up in the same manner. Roughly, the three main social classes bring up their children according to the ways of their forbears, and it is as well that we should examine those methods and get our first glimpse of the great class system which is the basis of our national life and has "made the country what it is."

The well-to-do (who always shout loudest of the influence of home life) leave this interesting work to paid nurses, who, as a class, are ignorant and lovable, filled with prejudice and devoid of thought. The first objective of these nurses is to enforce strict obedience, which is usually done by threats of punishment without explanation. The second is to keep the baby as quiet as possible, which they imagine can best be accomplished by slapping. The third objective is to hang on to their control over the child in the face of temporary claims from the parents and the more permanent claims of the governess or tutor who is to take over the animal's education. This is guaranteed to produce a child well grounded in accepting its elders' opinions without asking questions.

The children of the white-collared class or *petite bourgeoisie* are brought up by some young maidservant who comes in daily and hurries away home as quickly as she can, after her day's work. These little maidservants have a habit of changing their titles every ten years or so. In Queen Victoria's time they were called "slaveys" in order to draw attention to their social inferiority; but with the rise of an excessive *bourgeois* democracy they became in turn "servants," "helps," and now, I believe, they are known as "lady helps." It has generally followed the change from no stockings at all to cotton stockings, and thence to artificial silk ones. The children of this class see much more of their parents than those of the richer class, and are encouraged to perform in front of guests whenever they show the slightest appreciation of one of the arts. This breeds great jealousy in the different streets with their aspidistras in the windows, and gives great satisfaction to the mothers who otherwise would have nothing to talk about.

The children of the poor are scarcely brought up at all. In the morning they rise early and are dressed by the mother or eldest child, given a chunk of bread and margarine (if there is any—otherwise they have to wait until dinner-time) and pushed out to play in the streets or sent off to school while mother does the washing and cleaning of the house. They see their father at tea-time if he is in work; otherwise they see him only on Sundays. They are bathed once a week, generally in a tub in front of the fire, one after the other at an incredible speed, and in a confined atmosphere of constant irritation and squalor they pass their childhood. The moment they can escape from this sort of home they do so, and get married, hurrying up to produce another

generation that shall live just as miserably as they did themselves.

These three methods, of which, naturally, there are variations, produce in the first class a sense of inevitability of comfort; in the second class a self-conscious superiority to their poorer brethren and obsequiousness to their richer ones; and in the third class a perfect sense of general inferiority which enables them to realize immediately that their duty in life is "to go to work, to earn the money, to buy the bread, to get the strength to go to work, to earn the money, etc., etc." Now you were brought up in a mixed atmosphere. Your nurse was there to clothe you and to see that you did not break your neck by falling out of bed. Your mother fed you till you were weaned—what a horrid word—and took you about with her whenever possible. Your father always encouraged you to perform, but never in front of his guests. Your performances were generally fairly rotten, except when you were imitating me making a speech. Your powers of mimicry were and are good, and I was pleased to find that you had a sense of humour. I ticked that one off early in my list of qualities I wanted you to possess. I watched you with immense care and constant experiment. You were a very normal child, and I think a fairly new soul, for you were of a cheerful disposition. Old souls have a way of looking at one that fills one with sorrow: it's such a sad look; it seems to say: "Here I am, ready for the struggle again. I will try to do better, but don't let me be hurt too much." You, on the other hand, chuckled and said: "This is a grand place: I must see what it's all about. What's this, for instance?" And straightaway you would poke an inquisitive finger into my eye or seize firm hold of my mustachios

and pull them; or clutch jerkily at my ring and try to put it in your mouth. You became an expert crawler till you placed your knee on a drawing-pin, when, I am glad to say, you were much more surprised than hurt; and for weeks after that you moved at a terrific speed, trailing the damaged leg behind you and wearing out the toe-cap of your sandals. We kept you in sandals for years so that you could have good feet to walk through life on. Toes well separated and no corns or unpleasant crampings to endure. You wore the simplest of clothes in winter and nothing at all in summer, and you were brown, and healthy, and cheerful, and I was glad about you. (I have to "reminisce" in this chapter, so forgive me. You may find it useful when you have a son of your own.) You loved bright colours, and could distinguish different shades at an early age. Music could always make you keep still, and when I watched you listening to your mother or myself playing, I felt that your soul was probably older than I thought, or that we were clearing away the veils from It very satisfactorily. Bright, cheerful, jerky music would set you dancing in a delightfully primitive way—stamping your little feet and turning round and round, first one way and then the other, with your arms outstretched. You had a far better sense of time in music than I had, and if the music was played too slowly or too fast you would stop, shake your head, and say: "No, no." I imagined you, then, as the conductor of a massive orchestra. The organ you preferred to the piano; I forget if you do still. It was probably because of the fun in pulling out the stops, or the joy of changing from one manual to the other when you wanted to. There was one other joy you had, but, thank God, it was short-lived—and that was walking up and down on the

pedals. You did this one day when I had left the current switched on, and the noise nearly brought down the house; no wonder, for you had the appreciation to pull out every stop. You never learnt French or German: they grew up with English in you, and you did not notice it. Once I was afraid you would get the three languages muddled, but they sorted themselves out by the time you were seven. I suppose you don't remember your great sentence: "*Mein vater aujourn 'hui ist sehr angry*"; you said it to your uncle after you'd heard me talking on the telephone to a very stupid man who had done something he had no business to have done. Thank goodness, you always asked questions. "What, when, where and why" are always admirable words, especially for children. That they are apt to be irritating to parents is natural, but they need not be, if children understand that they are only to be used when necessary. For months my reply used to be: "Why do you want to know?" and then if the explanation was intelligent both to you and me you got your answer. That, of course, was only for abstruse questions.

I wonder if you remember my first explanation of birth to you. You were six, and you asked quite simply how you were born. It wasn't till you were thirteen that you asked why. However, I answered the easier question by reading you what Sidi Makloun ben Lachadar said to his son, and I shall write it down here for you to remember: "Lean thy head on my breast, little son, and play with my beard, and I will tell thee what thou hast asked. Some moons past thy mother and I prayed Allah for a son, and it befell that one night a small djinn (so small he could not be seen) came from within me and entered into thy mother, and there another djinn came to greet it, and even as two hand-

fuls of sand pressed together become as one, so became these two djinns. And the one—that was two—grew and grew within thy mother and became thee, little son, till thou wert too big for her to bear and, becoming ready for the world, came forth from out thy mother. Therefore, because thy mother has done this thing, thou wilt not stamp upon her face, and because thou art part of thy father, thou wilt not pull his beard too hard.” Later on I cut away the flowers from this for you; but you and I thought even then it was very beautiful. I remember your grandmother considering it very unnecessary, and saying that I ought to have told you that the doctor brought you in a bag, or that you had been bought at Barker’s sale, which is what I was taught all those years ago.

The best time for asking questions is when parent and child go on “’splorations” into the woods or on the river at night. Then we can look at the soil and the flowers and the insects, and listen to the birds calling, and wonder what they say. And up in the woods the quice call: “It’s my shoe, Betty, my shoe,” and we never have found out why they say that, but they do. Then when the stars are out and start blinking at us, we can shout at the world: “What to you are Plato and the swing of Pleiades?” Hand in hand we wonder about God. Is there or isn’t there? And we say: “Someone started this. There’s some purpose in it all.” We called that person God: it’s a good word: it can mean the creator, the starter, the ruler, anything nice and kindly that we wish, because we are happy. When we are unhappy we call him “Cheetan,” for that is Arabic for “Devil,” and we realize that God is away from us.

I never allowed you to go to church till you asked to go of your own accord. I took you myself on that first occasion,



and you enjoyed the singing. You did a lot of looking about that day, and when you began to gnaw the back of the pew I took you out because you were getting bored. You asked many questions, but the one that was most sensible was: "Does God like all that?" and I told you I did not know, but I thought very probably He did not and would prefer to talk to people alone when they wanted help. You also said you thought that I played the organ better than Mr. West, and that God would like me to play during the service instead; and I told you that however badly Mr. West played, if his heart was full of love while he played, it would be nicer for God to hear Mr. West than to hear me, who, in nine cases out of ten, only played for the sake of music *alone*. But it is not good for children to have dogmas thrust into their heads before the reason behind that head has worked it out and understands what it is accepting. It was enough for your upbringing at that age to feel that kindness to others and gentleness to all creatures was the right and proper thing for your development; and you did feel that. The dogmas of religion can be discussed by the pubertic child, and after that, even to the end of your days, you can theorize on man-made religions as much as you like.

Religions are fascinating, but you must know what they come from and how they grow. Never accept a conclusion without knowing the premises on things as important as religion and politics, for one is the science of spiritual and the other of material living. When we first discussed Mr. FEAR (and he is a very important man in the religious world too), we discovered that he had a habit of inviting himself in the dark. Do you remember how we traced his origin? How he started in the dark ages, when wandering men who were too lazy to work would go by night and take

possession of another man's wife, and his cave, and his pet dog, and kill the man, so that the lazy one could have them all for himself, and that weak people lived in nightly fear of strong people as a consequence. So strong was this expectation of being surprised that Mr. Fear came into his own and has remained with mankind ever since, especially at night. Then we went out into the dark night to find him, and we couldn't. Once you heard a sudden noise, and again you thought you saw a terrifying being standing by a gate, and we thought it really was Mr. Fear, so we went to investigate. Yet the noise was only a little grey rabbit, and the terrifying being was only an old sheep. We then read and re-read fairy-tales and found out how Mr. Fear was often a witch or a dragon or an ogre, and we understood how easy they were to conquer if one had the *right* armour. I have been busy for sixteen years forging this armour for you, and now that I think it is strong and good I am going to chase it with gold and silver for beauty's sake. Fairy-tales are good to read, for they take you away from this world when you want to be rid of worries, and they place you in a land where things always come right in the end if you are kind about ugliness and animals. I think that is a happy thought. Even now I nearly always read myself to sleep with a fairy-tale: I think I know every fairy-tale that ever was. They do not pretend to be facts, which is a satisfactory change from so much in real life. . . . Mr. Andrew Lang was one of the benefactors of our early world, and in his fairy books can be found most of the morals of the earth and certainly the most varied adventures. I remember how disappointed you were when I told you that originally Cinderella's slipper was of ermine and not glass, and that the fault had been in the translation of the

word "vair," which is heraldic, for *verre*, which means glass. But that is by the way. I was careful about the books I read to you, but I never minded what you read for yourself. I took you through Malory's "Morte d'Arthur" because I wanted you to conceive of an idyllic Middle Ages, so that when you came to read history you could understand the difference between fact and fiction. I read Dickens to you because of his humanity and his humour, and de Quincey because of the beauty of his prose. You wept over "Black Beauty," and I liked you for that until you told me I was taking a mean advantage over you by reading it with such feeling. See how I remember the things that stroked my vanity! I gave you all the history I could as soon as I thought you were capable of grasping its import: but better still, we talked history together. We spoke of the early communal days and the growth of feudalism; the great craftsmen's guilds and the effect of art on the world. Of great conquerors like Ghengis Khan and Timour, and of the wars of religion and desire of possession. (Someone else told you of Alfred and the cakes. It was not I.) Of Romanticism, Renaissance, and the growth of desire for appropriation; of the ghastly, wicked period of the Industrial Revolution, and its inevitable aftermath in which we find ourselves to-day. I showed you maps, and hoped you would love them, but you never did, till I built a huge map of Europe in the sand one summer holiday and let the water in where there should be sea, and then left you to it. When I came back you had shown your contempt for the world, for you had let the water in all over the land as well and drowned the whole of Europe. But even if you do not care for maps now you may do so when we have travelled together a little, and you want to compare distances and

understand relative space. I want you to read as much French literature as you can while you are in France, and I am also putting aside some English books of light reading for you when you come back. Read Proust if you can: you may find him a little sticky, but he will be an antidote to Anatole France whom, I was glad to hear, you loved.

How I keep on digressing! At this sort of job one needs a Mr. Speaker to keep one "in order." I wanted to tell you something of how I arranged contact for you with other children. The first thing I always did, if I was able, was to let you play with children of your own choice, and I never minded from what social stratum they came. So often the poorer children were the least reserved, and your games were consequently more full of unexpected happenings, though their disregard for material damage in the shape of broken windows was somewhat expensive. You were generally a leader in games, chiefly because of your vivid imagination in being able to invent a new game the moment you were tired of the old one. Strangely enough you never cared for lead soldiers—my passion when a boy; but "Robinson Crusoeing" took the place of "soldiers" as an extremely "solo" game. With other children you played Stanley and Livingstone, or bridge-building across the stream—and a very good game that was in the summer. I was careful, very careful, about your attitude towards toys. I was determined to undermine any feeling you might have of possessiveness. I dreaded that one day you would say: "Give me that toy. It's mine." Nothing is yours. All that you have control over you hold in trust. You are the steward of material things as you are the steward of your soul. Material possessions should be for the use of all, and in you as a child the desire to share your toys with others

was the outward proof of the strength of that philosophy which I had tried to teach you. Once you went to a party where there was a Christmas-tree, and all the children were asked at the end if they wanted the silver star that sparkled on the very top of the green fir. I was proud that you did not clamour with the others, but I knew you wanted it by the look in your eyes. I might not have remembered the incident had it not been that in return for your unselfishness God sent you a very beautiful dream. You looked unhappy one morning a few days after this Christmas party, and your mother asked you what the cause was. You looked up at her in that rather indignant way you used to have, and said: "I dreamt last night that I was the little silver star on the top of a great big Christmas-tree, and all the children wanted me." I thanked God for that dream. I dare say you will find in life a great deal of difficulty in working out in your own mind the rights and wrongs of possessiveness, but I did try to ground you in a lack of interest in private property, although, perhaps, I should have made the difference between personal property and private property clearer to you, and on definite socialist lines. I concentrated on influencing you to use your hands to make things, wishing you to know the joy of manual creation. I taught you also to use your hands in ordinary intercourse, so that they should not be a hindrance to you and make you feel awkward should politics or the theatrical profession appeal to you. I should have been ashamed to launch you as an actor if you were to be like ninety per cent. of our English performers, who spend most of a three-act comedy in fiddling with cigarettes because they do not know what to do with their hands. Actual manual labour of a less specialized form was also encouraged in you. Putting away your own playthings

was always insisted upon, and tidiness in your knick-knacks was urged in order to encourage a methodical mind. I wanted you to miss things that were out of place in your own room as I want you to miss things that are out of place in your own mind. In all things I encouraged you to make your own plans, devise your own games, and rely on your own brain for food to keep you entertained. Whether or not I have succeeded you know better than I, but reason must always agitate you save where there is a possibility of hurting someone else. Is this rather priggish, or is it in keeping with our philosophy? Where it is in tune with what you honestly think, hold to it. Where it seems discordant, think it out; retain the best; discard the bad. I am sorry this chapter is finished, for I loved you dearly as a little child before you went to your first school, all those long years ago.

## CHAPTER THREE

Recreation — Education, yours in particular — National schools — Private schools — Alfred and the cakes — Of no cakes — Of what you had learnt at twelve years of age — Of your moods — France, Germany and Holland — Of the *lycée* — Our projected voyage — Of universities — Knowledge in general — Education in general.

ONE of the worst results of our present-day civilization is our reliance on unnatural habits to aid natural actions. Owing to the fact that the English male animal seems unable to keep his inside in order by the consumption of digestible food-stuffs and the adoption of regular evacuation, he has taken it into his head that he cannot feel "fit" unless he is running about after, with, or away from, a ball. This thing has become a fetish, and the results are everywhere apparent, for there is now even less time than formerly for the said animal to think. You asked me to explain my own attitude on the subject of games. I have no attitude. I object to compulsory games, and I object to the belief that one cannot feel "fit" without them. That is all. Football bores me to distraction; hockey I used to enjoy greatly; but cricket was my last love, and I would rather spend a warm, sunny day playing or watching cricket than do most other things.

I am always amazed at the thousands of people who watch football, and when they sing a hymn to God before playing, I often cease to wonder at the causes for our national

economic position; it seems, then, as if we could be capable of any folly. The only recreations I actively encouraged you to take up were fencing, because of its grace and balance, riding because of its use, swimming for the same reason, and ju-jutsu because if you ever have to fight anyone it is far better to render him immediately harmless than to get your nose broken by resorting to the barbarous art of boxing. Blood-sports we discussed, and you agreed with me that there was no justification ever for harrying animals to their death for your own amusement, and that shooting birds, except for food, was just as wrong. One of the best tests to discover whether or not certain forms of recreation are good is to take stock of the people who indulge in them. You have only to meet four or five animal chasers of either sex once, to realize what instinct such cruelty develops.

I often wonder where the "circus mania" will lead us, for it is rapidly producing a nation of watchers and waiters instead of participators and doers. As you had the great advantage of missing an English public school, games were not forced on you, and therefore you may find them agreeable; but you have to be fairly expert at them in this country before you are invited to perform, and the things are now far less games than a business. In my days at school we were beaten very hard on the posterior for not being good at games, and house masters, as a general rule, far preferred to have a boy in their house who was in the football eleven than one in the sixth form. The results of that sort of thing are also apparent to-day. Swedish drill, or what is now called physical training, is far the best way for developing physically; besides, it needs no gadgets and avoids the possibility of having legs, arms and collar-bones broken. Do you remember being surprised, on the Channel boat, seeing a



friend of mine with his arm in a sling and a broken leg, by his remark that he had had such a magnificent holiday in Switzerland? You need not have been. He really did enjoy it—breaks and all.

When you were six I sent you to the National school here, at home, because the education there is common to the majority, and is as good as any other in the country. Also, I wanted you to meet fellow humans of a different social level in order to prevent the development of that ghastly attitude of unconscious superiority towards them which is the hall-mark of that stratum into which you were born. You were very happy there, and your friendship with the local postman's son proved most useful to your father whenever he needed things fetched from the village. It was against the post office rules, no doubt; but as it inconvenienced no one, my conscience did not prick me. At one period you showed an antipathy towards girls of your own age, but that was due to the unfair advantage they take over the mere male in teasing, slapping and pinching without fear of retaliation from well-brought-up little boys. I explained to you at the time that the only reason men do not hit women is because a woman is not built as strongly as a man and can easily be seriously hurt. It is not that women are more sacred than men, for the Soul has no sex. There is never any reason for anyone to hit or beat anyone else. To do so merely shows lack of control when it is done in a temper, and is entirely sadistic when done in cold blood. The parent or master who thinks he has to resort to physical force with children is not fit to be in a position of authority. Beating only brings the required result by developing the fear instinct in the child, and is consequently the most stupid method of

correction ever devised. It is an excellent lie-producer and hate-breeder. For what is called the "incorrigible" boy, who apparently does not fear being beaten, it is merely a hardener.

You stayed at the National school until you were nine; then I sent you to a private school in Surrey, with a young, progressive and intelligent head master who had an extremely sympathetic wife. Here you met members of your own class, and found them, at first, very strange and very dull. You played organized games and liked them. I breathed again when I heard that. All things considered, you were taught in a sensible way, and education was striven after instead of *inducation*. Most English schools consider that education consists in *inducating* a mass of facts in order that they can be *educated* word for word long before there is time for digestion. This accomplished, the facts are then forgotten. For this form of inanity fabulous sums are claimed from unintelligent parents, and paid without a murmur. We did not subjugate you to that after the age of nine.

You stayed at the Surrey school until you were twelve, then you had a year with me; after that came your present *lycée* in France. The interval of a year at home enabled me to see what you had learnt, and you were not nearly up to the standard I had expected. I did not tell you, for it would only have worried you. Let me search my notebooks to see what was wrong. Firstly, your languages—German and French—were in a bad way. You had forgotten too many words. I did not bother about that, because we were to speak them so much during the year that was to come. Mathematics—bad: even worse than your father's. I did not mind that because it could not be

helped; your mathematical mind had not developed in the right way. The *lycée*, I thought, would set that right, because French masters teach mathematics in a much better manner than Englishmen. They will explain, and not merely expound. English—good. You were beginning to write a good letter; your sentences were rounded; your words well chosen. I was mightily pleased with that.

History had been badly taught. You came back with the story of Alfred and the cakes. I dreaded this, but you made it worse when you added to that knowledge a story of one of the Georges and an apple-dumpling. I wrote to your head master about that, telling him I did not care a damn for Alfred and the cakes—I wanted you taught where and how the woman got the oats to make the cakes. Then you told me of the British Empire, and how it was won by a series of battles; but you did not know why. You could not even tell me how we added Hong Kong, and when I told you, you were shocked. Your master ought to have shocked you long before, not left it for me to do. You knew nothing of the French Revolution, except that people had their heads cut off; again you did not know why. You had forgotten to ask questions. I was miserable about that. You could not tell me the date of the Russian Revolution, which is about the most important date in the world. You thought the English Revolution of 1642 was a national affair, when it was only the first blow of rival Whig and Tory landlords in their two hundred and fifty years' feud that was to follow; in fact, it was as much a religious sectarian war as anything else, and in no sense a rising of the poor: they were better off then than before or after. China seemed to have been left out of your curriculum, and you could not even tell me Mohammed's five points. Oh, son,

son, did I make a mistake in sending you to the school of that intelligent man and his most sympathetic wife? Geography—I expected the worst. Do not worry yet a while about isthmuses or peninsulas or basins—those are apt to be boring; but do try to get some idea into your head about the relative positions of various countries. Here am I, writing as if you still worried about isthmuses or peninsulas or basins; and all the while you are in Rennes—probably teaching the others geography by now! When you were twelve you did not know.

Science—one of its myriad branches—you were interested in, and I knew why. The fun you had with my microscope gave you a liking for entomology; but there was no excuse for putting what you called a “performing” flea into the bed of Smith minor, or whoever the boy was. Your head master never told me that; I heard it from his sympathetic wife. General knowledge was good: that, I hoped, was because you had been taught to read the papers, though I have heard hints that it was probably due to inordinate curiosity. Not such a bad trait: showing a fairly active mind. Economics—which I insisted you should be taught—proved satisfactory, and your contempt for the reason of Gresham’s law is admirable; but we will have some of that later on. From the age of twelve to thirteen I saw as much of you as possible; and a strange beast you seemed at times. You developed a certain sulkiness, to which I paid not the slightest attention; this rather annoyed you, but was the best way of dealing with it. You had a habit of disappearing for most of the day and refusing to tell me where you had been. I was really angry, secretly, when I discovered that you were writing poetry that you did not think I was intelligent enough to appreciate. Now, I know, as well as

anyone, that there are certain thoughts and lonelinesses in a boy that are sacred, but not a form of creation. Contemplation and the thoughts that work through the groping mind—yes; but I wanted to read what you had written, and you would not let me. God knows no one cared twopence when I was a child what I was trying to write, and so I did not bother to mention what I had been doing; still, what you wrote mattered to me, and yet you treated me like that. My pride was hurt. Did you realize it at the time? We went to France for most of that summer, and you were very difficult at times. What on earth was going on in your head then? Reaction from having had too much attention paid to you by me, I supposed, or desire for fresh associations. For three days I left you in Arras while I toured the old battlefields alone, because you did not want to see the scenes of any of those “silly old battles.” Here, I thought, was the result of pacifist teaching; but I rather suspected it was because you had not been in any of those “silly old battles” yourself. When I came back, and we went to the cinema together, I nearly jumped out of my seat with joy when you said: “I was getting a little bored without you.”

We went to Germany in the autumn and walked in the Black Forest, and you were very nice and polite and seemed to enjoy my stories of werewolves and vampires. I lost caste in your eyes when I refused to wear leather shorts, but you forgot that I suffer from gout, and bare knees frightened me into thinking, probably erroneously, that my knee-joints would swell like my toe-joints have. You drank too much beer, until you were sick: which cured you—as I expected.

Christmas we spent in Holland, and we certainly did have some marvellous bicycle rides there; also you became quite a competent skater. When you were thirteen you

went to the *lycée* instead of becoming part of that strange English public school system. The reason you went to France for this part of your education is that over there, as I knew, you would be taught to work and appreciate scholarship more than athletic prowess. You do not associate with only one social class, but with many. You can get away, by going home in the evenings, from people you associate with during the day, in order to have undisturbed time to yourself. You are not taught that conventions are all-important: you are not told your school is better than any other: you are not constantly in competition to try and prove how much better you are than others, and you are not pestered by petty disciplinary measures. You are not given unexplained and unexplainable slogans like "playing the game," or "the team spirit"; for the French know that the game differs always according to the players, that its rules are by no means universal, and that the "team spirit," or working together, is the complete antithesis of "healthy competition," which is another slogan. In France, thank God, you will also learn to appreciate logic. Languages are not taught well there; but you would be talking French, which would be impossible in England. You do a certain amount of Latin, which I do not mind; but ancient Greek is entirely unnecessary, unless as a hobby, and treated as any other semi-dead language. I should have preferred you to avoid Latin and devote the time to Italian or Russian instead. Anyone with a good knowledge of French and English can read Latin with a dictionary, but a good knowledge of Latin cannot enable you to speak French or English—which is the important and useful thing. This argument causes really old university graduates to fume with rage in England, whether they under-

stand the language now or not. You have one more year at the *lycée*, and I expect you will be very sorry to leave it. According to Mr. Le Mannach, you are doing exceedingly well, but have caused your English teacher as much disturbed doubting as any French boy in an English school would his French teacher. Science is moving rapidly, I hear; chemistry, biology, but not physics. I can understand that. Geography is still bad. I suppose it has been a shock to you to realize that the French have an empire too, and conquered in the same way, do not forget. Next year you are to travel with me; we will compare the different ways in which the English, French, Portuguese and Dutch run their empires. That should be interesting for both of us. We will start travelling next autumn and work this way, and if it takes more than a year, well and good: New York, San Francisco, Hawaii, Samoa, Auckland, Tahiti, Sydney, Hong Kong, Shanghai, Yokohama, Singapore, Java, Ceylon, Bombay, Aden, Kenya, the East Coast of Africa, Durban, Johannesburg, Cape Town, Madeira, Casablanca, Fez, Algiers, Tunisia, Greece, Constantinople, and back by the Orient express. That should be interesting for us. How would that do? You will have to look up a map for this. It will leave Russia, Scandinavia and South America to be looked at later. If you are bored you can go where you like alone. If you want to bring a school friend from Rennes with you, I will pay his expenses. If you suggest a different itinerary, do so, but in plenty of time. Of course, when you finish with the *lycée* and fancy that you would have preferred an entirely English education because you find your English friends so much better informed and altogether much more polished than you are, you will be able to blame me for the rest of your life; but

even if you do, I am certain that if you had received a purely English education the blame would be much more deserved. This next year is going to be another one of ascertaining how my experiment is going on, and I shall expect to find a great change in you.

When we have finished our trip I am going to send you to a university abroad, and you must make the choice between Bonn, Rome and Moscow. The first would be best for philosophic and literary subjects; the second for the arts, and painting, perhaps, in particular; and the third for the sciences, especially mathematics. Make your choice and let me know. You can stay there till you are twenty-one, giving yourself three years, or if you do not want a degree you can spend a year at each. You know the rudiments of Russian and Italian, and you speak German very well, so I will leave it to you. At twenty-one you will know what you want, and I will add another university for your consideration on one condition—Vienna if you are taking up medicine. I shall talk to you later of professions. University life in England is a varied affair; the two old universities are largely class centres where public school traditions are carried on, and where the students live in colleges. The other universities are non-residential, and more local in their convocation. I do not like these class universities, and the oldest are more places of recreation than educating establishments. There is also too much restriction in the political thoughts of the students, and too much permitted persecution of minority opinion.

At the moment German universities are being encouraged in Semitic persecution, which is an abomination, and it may be you will prefer not to contemplate residence at Bonn. Association with boys richer than yourself tends



to extravagance, and that is another drawback to Oxford or Cambridge. The provincial outlook of the English students of the other universities would be, perforce, hampering to your own development, and I would not wish you to be subject to this sort of thing. A person who has never travelled outside this country and can talk no language but his own is very sorely handicapped.

American universities are far too athletic-ridden for my liking, and I am glad to see that reaction is setting in there at the moment. I feel myself weakening in my range of places for you. If there is some university for which you have a preference we might discuss it, but I want you to acquire a fourth language—and I do not include American in this. You will find it a good thing to cultivate your memory yourself, and this can be done in a variety of ways. Learning verse is good fun, and by practising this you will be able to learn twenty lines in ten minutes, which I used to consider my *tour de force*. Here I must insist again that you should always look up and find out facts and theories you hear discussed or that pass through your mind, with which you are not fairly fully conversant. This does not mean that the acquired knowledge is to be inflicted on all and sundry; but it is amazing how useful it may turn out to be in entirely different circumstances. You speak and understand French much better than you write it, and you write German much better than you speak it. Why is this? I wish you would talk this over with Mr. Le Mannach and let me know what he says: for it is important that you should write French well, especially for any examination.

Well, that is the way you have been, are being, and are about to be educated, and it is an education that financially is by no means expensive. It should launch you into the

world with an understanding of the English classes, thorough knowledge of three widely spoken languages, and an acquaintance with all the chief countries and peoples of the world. You will know something of how these folk live, and what their gods are, and if you are not a sympathetic, understanding sort of creature after that, there is less in education than I imagined, and more in the hands of a curiously humorous fate. You must keep up all this, for two of your aunts, when young maidens, knew German very well, and now they cannot put two sentences together, while your own father spent years and years learning Latin, and yet cannot read Latin prose without looking up every other word. Education means "drawing out" and "developing," and I have tried to do that with you. Facts, and your own interpretation of facts, comprehension and thought, interest and a quick habit with the dictionary—these come from good education. "Agitate, organize, educate," was the old socialist slogan, and in education it should be: "Agitate to acquire knowledge; organize the facts in an organized mind; educate for the information and guidance of others." This is your privilege; go ahead and be worthy of it.

## CHAPTER FOUR

Of the Widow Robinson—Of sex—Masochism—Sexual suicides—Marriage—Birth control—Sex crimes—Masculine and feminine qualities—Of repression—And of the Law.

You are at an age now when you should understand everything that is known about sex in all its many varied forms; for sex is the basis of all close personal relationship, in spite of what "the Widow Robinson" may say to protect her own prejudiced moral code. You know about procreation and birth, and you have probably already had personal experience of the former, unless French schoolboys have changed very much during the last twenty years or so. What you probably do not know is your own sexual make-up, and I shall give you some data which should make it easier for you to understand the urges and desires of your physical and mental side.

Physical desire depends on glandular secretions; but which are these actual glands we do not yet know. A mixture of these secretions, when fully developed, causes you to be physically attracted to that sex whose masculine and feminine make-up coincide with your own; that is to say, if you are less female than male you will be attracted to those who are less male than female. When this is the other way about it produces homo-sexuality, and when perfectly balanced it produces bi-sexuality, or physical attraction to either sex. It is this search of the male for the

feminine traits that is the great search for the soul-mate in life; the desire of one part to find the other part in order to make the physical whole—the perfect blend of male and female qualities. It is the life-urge to discover the hermaphroditic state from which mankind originally evolved. The reason why so many marriages are failures is that these male and female qualities are not mathematically correct. For instance, if a man having one quarter female traits and three-quarters masculine ones marries a woman with one half female and one half masculine traits, the marriage will be unhappy. That man needs a wife with three-quarters female and one quarter masculine traits. In the case of low-sexed people this trouble need not arise, for the traits in that case are far more vague and more capable of fitting in one with the other. Natural low-sex is a godsend. Acquired low-sex often develops into egocentricity. A constant desire for self-abuse is an indication that you are highly sexed; you will find such a condition very worrying, and a good deal of trouble will come your way in life if you let your high-sex run away with you. Self-abuse, which is as common amongst women as men, is not a thing to be scared of. Schoolmasters in my day caused endless worry to nervous-minded boys by warning them that the lunatic asylums were full of masturbators. What he did not explain was that such a habit was the result of mental disturbance, and not the cause. Naturally, excess is a bad thing, and constantly to deplete your nervous force by getting rid of valuable chemical substances is exceedingly stupid. Do not be worried if you find yourself with homosexual instincts. Those instincts are fairly common in both sexes between the ages of thirteen and eighteen. However, should they continue later in life, there is only one cure,

and that is to alter the proportions of glandular secretions by operation; only we do not know which the gland is. One adrenal gland in a homo-sexual woman was removed some time ago in Vienna with beneficial results, and the grafting of a human testicle on the abdominal wall in a homo-sexual man has also had beneficial results; but the main reason why, in England, we look upon this special condition as criminal, is because we know nothing about it. It is the anti-Galileo attitude of mind. When we do learn something about glands (and it will not be from the British medical profession, unless they add to the list of subjects taught at the hospitals) we ought to be able to have great fun. Nagging wives, for instance, will be cured by operation; haunting fears removed; physical courage implanted, and so on.

Another side of sex you should know something about is masochism, the physical pleasure of receiving pain, which is amazingly common and very little realized, and sadism, the joy of inflicting physical pain. A few years ago several respectable *bourgeois* walked three miles to inspect a sun-bathing establishment. When they saw what they had expected to see, they set about the naked bathers with umbrellas. It was the only time in their fading little lives that they could express themselves sexually without being arrested for indecency. They loved it, but they did not tell anyone that. Self-inflicted torture, such as tying oneself up with cords, and causing an orgasm by concentration and pain, has led lately to several unintentional suicides that could have been averted if the parents had discussed sex normally with their children. The complexes in this branch are legion.

I want you to be extremely careful about entering into

matrimony. You must understand that the search for the soul-mate is not likely to be realized in a short time, and that mere physical attraction is no excuse for tying yourself up with a woman in a permanent union. The real union is a soul union; sex is incidental. Never make the mistake of confusing the mental with the physical, for that way lies heartache and other unpleasant experiences. The object of marriage is procreation. Companionship is possible without this, and so is physical desire and realization. I am rather amoral about these matters, and consider the continental idea of licensed and inspected brothels far better than the English method of closing both eyes except when making an arrest. I do not mind whither your sex leads you as long as in its realization you do not make the other person unhappy, or land yourself with the responsibility of fatherhood by excessive zeal. The covering of humbug and hypocrisy with which sex is shrouded in this country is responsible for much unhappiness, and the ignorance of these matters, especially among the *petit bourgeoisie*, is positively dangerous. Hundreds and thousands of unhappy marriages can be traced to this ignorance, and the respect for convention has kept couples tied to each other in misery and soul-veiling until they live together from force of habit, whereas they should be divorced and separated for the good of their two souls. Suicide, nervous depression, hysteria and many other forms of mental lack of balance are very, very often caused by sex troubles, for which ignorance and convention have prevented the cure.

Birth control is much spoken of in these days, and is chiefly opposed on religious grounds. These grounds are that the natural—again used non-relatively, as usual in this country—function of sex is to produce children, and that

You will realize, then, how difficult the soul-mate will be to find. Where did you get hold of this theory, you ask? From reading and thinking, and chiefly from the latter, I answer.

I always encouraged you to be proud of your body and never ashamed of it, for curiosity about bodies can lead you into awkward predicaments; it encourages people to write rude things on the walls of public lavatories—a trick commoner than you would imagine, and usually confined to the *petite bourgeoisie*, who are brought up in the belief that the naked body is something to be ashamed of. During the last European war the recruits' first medical inspection always showed the doctor from which class of society the one type of man came, for when ordered to undress, the ex-public schoolboy and the "working class" stripped naked, whereas the *petit bourgeois* kept his vest on till the second order, and tried to make the vest pull out to the length of a shirt. This is the class that produces the majority of sexually abnormal people; yet it is not their fault, but that of their parents. This abnormality also includes sex crimes.

It may be that in days to come you will encounter the drug addict. Now, drugs are useful in moderation in certain circumstances, but when they become a habit it leads rapidly to the veiling of the Soul, and the individual becomes completely altered. Different drugs have different effects; cocaine, which is perhaps the commonest, produces inveterate lying after the first few months, and the whole moral tone of the addict sinks to deceit and cunning of the most unpleasant kind. Like sex, the more you partake of drugs the more you want, until at last a mania develops like an ever-present cloud that hides the sunlight of life and casts its shadows all around. Morphia, opium, heroin, hashish

are the other drugs that devastate, and although I urge you to try everything once, in this case I do not advocate touching them with a barge-pole unless you are certain of your strength, and merely want to try once. This will be a disappointing experiment, for cocaine will make you sneeze, morphia will send you to a sleep of nightmares, opium will make you sick, heroin will make you run at the eyes, and hashish smokes like a hay-cigarette. So now I have told you.

I want you always to discuss with me any problems of sex that worry or interest you; we will work them out together, so that you can know yourself well, and thereby be able to know others for your mutual benefit. Knowledge of people means understanding of people, and understanding will prevent you from usurping God's rôle of condemnation, which seems to be the great hobby of so many of our fellow creatures. That there is nothing unclean in sex but the thoughts behind that sex must be appreciated. That its main function is procreation, but that artificial restrictions and our artificial life have developed from it a series of little understood complexes that frighten the orthodox and damage the possessor by ignorance. That the most weird complexes can generally be traced to their origin if mental, and their origin can be conjectured if physical. That the individual is not responsible for his nature, and should not be condemned. That where you repress some instinct too forcibly it may burst forth overpoweringly in another direction. Our laws in England on sex are archaic and hypocritical, founded on ignorance, prejudice and fear. Under the new social system we may be emancipated for the ultimate good of the race, but until that comes about, I fear injustice and cruelty in this direction will reign supreme.



## CHAPTER FIVE

Travel—Of New York—The Middle West—Of California—San Francisco—San José—Carmel—Hollywood—Farewell to America—Of Hawaii and Samoa—New Zealand—Tahiti—Australia—Hong Kong—Shanghai—Pekin—Japan—Of Malaya.

It is good for people to travel. It is good to get away from the nest. Staying at home kills individuality. Home life is only good for you as long as it gives you a philosophy compatible with your own. When that ceases, off you must go in spite of parental possessiveness. There are a few assertions to start with, and now we will travel together on paper, as I hope we shall on land and sea when you leave the *lycée*. We will talk over this journey and I will give you a grounding in the lands and people we are to visit. Mind you, we go humbly and second class. We go to see, not to blink at, to laugh with and not at; to praise whenever possible; to see beauty and ugliness and to be happy.

What boat for New York then? I think a German boat if you do not mind. You are not pestered to run round the deck after quoits; stewards seem pleased to see you, and look upon you as a guest and not an intruder as they do on so many of our lines. Five days on the Atlantic, and then we reach New York, passing the statue of Liberty, or else, lower down, landing at Brooklyn. What of the vaunted skyline? What is it to you? To me it suggests

a set on a film studio floor, and the skyscrapers look like cut-out cardboard. The town itself is so dark, the houses are so high that I feel shut in. I get claustrophobia in this city, and there is no colour: all grey, grey and huge. Look at the people—just like London. No difference so far. It is not so noisy as London, but it is littered with paper. Paper off chewing-gum packets, paper off cigarette packets: paper everywhere. We stay at a three-dollar hotel, and find we have a bath and a radio; a water-closet, and, wonder of wonders, this works. Why, the hotel is warm, the corridors are warm, the bathrooms are warm. This is paradise indeed. And, son, you will find this in every big or little city in the States—perfect toilet arrangements and perfect heating.

Let us take the train to Buffalo and call on Uncle Roswell, whom you have not seen for years. The American railway stations are gorgeous, clean and full of interest, and the trains are heated evenly, corridors and lavatories as well. Traveling here is going to be fun. We will go up to-morrow and look at Niagara, and we will be real tourists and put on waterproofs and walk under the falls, hear the roar of the mighty waters as they crash into space, and sniff the spray and wonder how many live things go over the brink every second. At the Buffalo Club we will play America's favourite indoor game—skittles (but they do not call it this), and feel amazingly foolish because we haven't the knack of rolling that heavy ball with sufficient force.

We will go on to Cleveland next and call on Uncle Bernie, and perhaps motor over to the school where I once lectured. Here you will meet more "uncles," and you can note how different these schools are from English ones. From Cleveland to Chicago is not far, and you will probably

like to see the town that held the largest pack of criminals in the U.S.A. during their days of prohibition. The United States has always been famous for its gangs, but whether Al Capone and his merry men were really any worse than the "Dead Rabbits" and the "Bowery Boys" of nineteenth-century New York is a moot point. Certainly in Al Capone's days there were no women to compare with Hellcat Maggie or Gallus Mag of Water Street, and the names of the twentieth-century gangsters were no improvement on such names as: Googy Corcoran, Slops Conolly, Louie the Lump, Humpty Jackson, Gyp the Blood, Dopey Benny and Little Augie.

In the train once more, and forward to the Middle West, where all the towns are exactly alike, and the air is pure and so dry that if you walk across a carpet to open the door you may get an electric shock from the door-handle. Notice in Nebraska the real beauty of American domestic architecture. You see long roads of houses in differing styles with grass bordering the footpaths, undivided by palings or hedges, open and inviting and completely detached, and at night the blinds will not be down. It is strange that in a land of so much crime houses should be so unprotected, and that insularity is apparently absent. Notice something else, too—the absence of gardens. Trees by the hundred, but flowers are very rare. The American business man has no time to cultivate flowers, and gardeners are rare and extremely expensive.

We shall pass through Omaha and thence to Denver, leaving Kansas City, with its ghastly war memorial, to the south. From Denver we turn due west and make for Salt Lake City, most beautiful of all towns in the States. By this time you will have learnt many things. How good is

the food on the trains, especially Blue-point oysters; how difficult it is to put your trousers on in an upper berth; how annoying it is to sit among the wash-basins on a hard bench if you wish to smoke; what fun it is to drink iced water out of a paper cup; how comfortable the club car is; how to prevent a large Middle-Westerner from choosing the spittoon in front of you for his needs when there are at least twenty others not exactly in front of you; how to switch the radio on to the programme you want without appearing bashful; how to prevent the candy-cum-post-card seller from pestering you to death; in fact, hundreds of matters that add to the enjoyment of these admirably equipped but incredibly slow trains. In Salt Lake City we shall talk to Mormons, discovering that they have not a hundred wives each and are good, earnest people who know how to rule a city better than any other sect except those of our faith in Milwaukee. We will return to Ogden for the joy of crossing the many miles of the Salt Lake. Behind you at eventime the setting sun turns the peaks of the Rockies into lumps of pink Edinburgh rock; the lake seems entirely asleep, wondering in its dreams how the salt came to be there at all; and the salt sighing, perhaps, because it is all alone. Now you will begin to feel warmer, for we are dropping down through Nevada into California. There is still snow on the mountains, but away below you will see for the first time in your life semi-tropical vegetation. Cacti and palm trees, oranges and lemons, mimosa—they call it acacia (which it is)—and great fat trees of red and mauve azaleas.

We detrain at Sacramento, the capital of the state, and here we notice the gleaming whiteness of the buildings; the soft, clear sky is so bright it seems the whole firmament is one big sun. Here are the Municipal Buildings in which your

father once had the honour of addressing the State Education Committee, and where the demonstrations against the Governor were staged when he refused to order the re-trial of Tom Mooney, who was "framed up" as long ago as 1917. Sacramento will be the first town you have been in where mosquito doors are in use, and you will compare the porches of the houses to meat-safes because of the wire. There is nothing old to see here, but the state records of the pioneering days make fascinating reading and tell of the Spanish colonization and the old "Bear" Republic that lived for a short but glorious period in days gone by.

We will go south by west now and make for the coast at San Francisco. You will be disappointed in this town, probably having imagined it as I did, a white and red Spanish city set on the blue Pacific. It is not like that; it is grey and dismal and skyscraping, and in the rain the blue Pacific resembles the English Channel, and the bay is like the entrance to Havre and not so pretty as St. Malo. San Franciscans will be indignant at this, but wait. . . . When the sun shines on the bay and with your back to the town you are looking up away from Oakland, then the water begins to sparkle, the green of the shores wakes up and changes colour, and the trees try and look at themselves in the water and are annoyed when a boat heedlessly cuts their reflection in half. Let us pray for a fine day then. Oakland is the terminus of the railway, and we have to board a large and dirty ferry-boat which moves rather wearily towards San Francisco across the bay. We will wander over this grey city and take a ratchet tram-ride up the steep hills. We will stroll through the Chinese quarter and feel extremely uncelestial, and eat cuckoo-clams in a little restaurant with Uncle Victor, who is bound to have come from San José to

meet us. From San Francisco, boats go to many far-away places. To Panama, Callao, Valparaiso, Santiago, and down to the Horn; to Tahiti and New Zealand, Hawaii and Japan. This sounds like Mr. Masfield's verse, but it is not really. There is an especially good orchestra here that used to be conducted by Uncle Basil, and we might dip our ears into their harmonies for an evening and then see a bit of night-life—artificial and far more civilized here than before the earthquake, or fire, as the natives prefer to call it. Late at night we could take a car and ride to the top of the hills at the back of the town, if the moon is out, and then we can feast our eyes on the bay that lies like a chain of lagoons beneath us. This is a grand sight and gives one grand thoughts to sleep on.

We shall move on next to stay with Uncle Victor's family in San José, a pleasant, white little town surrounded by orchards of apricots and prunes, oranges and lemons. Here in the orange groves, when the nights are cold, big oil braziers are set alight every twenty yards between the trees till the smoke hangs like a protective pall over the fruit and keeps the frost away. Sometimes when you eat oranges there are black smudges in the pores, but if those were not there neither would the oranges be.

Every town in the States seems to have a country club not far off where the good and great can assemble and enjoy the mixed amenities that each one enjoys unmixed in his own home. If we are very polite to our hosts they may suggest a week-end at Monterey or Carmel, and a drive there in a motor-car with a radio in it through the Californian red-woods, so we will be very good and wonder how Monterey is doing or whether more or fewer artists have congregated in Carmel. And what a drive it is going to be. We will

go slowly and we will sing old songs together. Last time I made this trip, in the days of prohibition, Uncle Victor's mother put out three bottles of whisky for us to take, but we were half-way to Monterey before she realized she had left them behind. It was a very unhappy experience for us all.

Well, we will imagine we go to Monterey, or rather Del Monte, which is next door, where there is a large and luxurious hotel. Our journey thither from San José will be through orchards in blossom for many miles; then comes a plunge into the red-woods. And the trees really are red, a deep carmine-cum-Indian-red—that is to say, the trunks of them, and the twigs, and the little veins in the leaves. Birds are scarcer than they should be: at least they do not sing as they might. Perhaps farther back in the woods, away from the road, they talk to each other more. In Del Monte we shall have a grand time, and we will motor to Carmel, the one little unspoilt part of urban America. A village . . . no more . . . and each house different; often inhabited by a painter man and his family, and each marked with the individuality of the owner. Of all places in the States this is the quaintest. There are little shops that sell arty-crafty things. We feel that all the people here are striving so hard to live a natural and creative life that strangers should not intrude. We are apart from the crudities of the country in this little village, and the language we hear spoken does not amaze us. They do not talk of a comfort station when they mean a public lavatory, nor of a funeral home when they mean an undertaker's office. A cemetery is not a memorial park, and a car-greasing station is not a lubri-torium. Columbariums are known as crematoriums here. Nevertheless, I am afraid they say "Zee" for Z and

“period” for “full stop.” I was thought quite *bourgeois* once when I called a cemetery a mortician’s larder, which was my own invention.

When you are tired of Del Monte and want to go even farther south, you will want to make for Los Angeles and have a glimpse of Hollywood. It will be disappointing, but you shall have a look. We will leave Uncle Victor and train there, and we shall discover a colossal town that seems to stretch away on a flat plain for ever and ever. If we can find a friend who lives in the Beverley Hills we will go up there for dinner and look on Los Angeles and Hollywood from the heights. Thence, as far as you can see, the rows of houses and the long, long streets fade into the distance. Lights twinkle so far away that they almost vanish in the night. It is vast and flat and roaring with traffic. You cannot do anything in that town without a motor-car, for as far as I know there are no buses, and only a street railway to places that you do not want to visit. Making expeditions to the studios, we may watch the directors at work. You can go round and see the night-life of Hollywood for yourself—its chief *habitués* being the third-rate artists who do not work very hard because they have little to do. The hard workers cannot afford dissipation if they are to give of their best. All the men seem to wear light-coloured camel-hair or Jäger coats. The young men have strange moustache lines on their upper lips that are meant to attract women, while the women seem to have just come from a good meal of raw meat that they have eaten with their fingers, for their mouths and nails are scarlet like fresh blood. They have no eyebrows. They look very strange and are devoid of knowledge. Nevertheless you shall see what you wish, and fall in love with as many as you like; but do not suggest bring-



ing any of them back, for their complexions might run in our damp climate, and then all the colours would get mixed; the eyebrow-pencilled lines would disappear and the false lashes get unstuck, and you would see them in all their facial nakedness. No, son, Hollywood will disappoint you, and we shall have to return to San Francisco to take our boat for the west. Maybe, before you leave, you will hear this story from the very undertaker who told it me in San Francisco. Once he was called in to perform the funeral rites for an American who had been cut to pieces by a passing train. He assembled the human remains as best he could, injected each part with formaldehyde, covered the scars with theatrical grease-paint, rouged the cheeks, relined the eyebrows, and then laid the body out in full evening clothes. The family then came to view the corpse, and pronounced it a swell piece of work. This is a true story—really. Besides, in America ninety per cent. of the population are put into their coffins in their best clothes—underclothes as well. They think even God may have a few human weaknesses.

Carving our way through the blue Pacific we shall look back at the States and feel rather breathless about it all. We shall wonder if they will ever know what they are seeking, and, if they do, if they will ever find it. We shall wonder if this strange hotch-potch of races will ever make a nation, and whether that nation will ever give more than materialism to the world. Then we will think of the youth of the country that we met, and our eyes will grow bright with expectancy, and we shall feel that the future will be safe in their keeping, for they are young and upstanding and fine-looking and full of ideals. But till this youth reaches its positions of power you may echo the thought that crossed

my mind when I first left the States: "You may call it God's own country, but I don't think He's been home lately."

The boat will soon be nearing the Hawaiian Islands, and on the quayside at Honolulu we shall find the brown skins and the flat noses of the people. Although they may greet us with garlands for our necks and smiles for our souls, we shall be sorry for the contamination of the world we know. They wear American clothes and are sophisticated beyond belief. American rule has taught them the value of the dollar and its all-pervading power, and these once simple, kindly folk have lost the innocence of a primitive people and are busy with material things of little consequence. They still have their music, however, and to hear the rise and fall of their sweet voices to the accompaniment of their own guitars on a moonlight evening can make even the hardest European feel better and kinder in his heart.

We will go on to Samoa, where Robert Louis Stevenson died, and see what our fellow subjects have done with that former German outpost of Empire. Savaii and Upolo are under New Zealand's mandate now, but Tutuila, Manua, Ofu and Olesanga are ruled by the United States. We might wander up Mount Vaea, that hangs over Apia like a sheltering breast, and see where they laid Stevenson. We might even feel envious. I shall, at any rate. We shall prefer Samoa to Honolulu, probably because the natives appear more friendly. Possibly this little handful of islands will fascinate you; you may want to stay and idle on those lovely beaches where the bright-coloured flowers come down to the sand and seem to watch you bathing, between tall, straight trees. You may even be like the boys of Tahiti, whither we shall shortly go, and wear a scarlet hibiscus behind your ear.

New Zealand is our next point of call; we shall land in Auckland, having time before our boat sails to glance at Wellington, the capital—"Windy Wellington" it is called, and it will live up to the title. You will like the New Zealanders, for they are quiet and friendly. They will talk a great deal about England and tell you their climate is similar to ours: you must not undeceive them or they will be unhappy and think you bad-mannered. From Auckland we sail towards the Friendly Isles and the Society Isles, and among the latter we find Tahiti, the best island of the lot. Here Gaugin lived, escaping from the rush and whirl of *bourgeois* life, finding comfort in the majesty of Mount Orohena and sympathy in the softness of Mount Aorai. He fled there to express himself. He cast behind him the conventions of his class; the occupation of his career; the family of his choice; and just came away: came away to a country unspoilt by machines and money, fresh and beautiful like a woman ever young. Here in this island he found peace and the inspiration to paint lovely strange things that God had put into his heart. I often think that this breaking away from everything to find oneself must be a thing thousands of married *petits bourgeois* would like to do if they could only make the start. You will find much liberty under the French here, and no interference with the native mode of living or tribal customs, though many of them are dying out.

Back to Auckland, leaving a little bit of your heart to make Orohena orchids grow more profusely, and thence on to Sydney, to see one of the very grandest harbours in the world, the ante-room to that vastness of land we know as Australia, the great majority of whose very few inhabitants cluster in towns. You will like the Australians because they

are noisy and friendly; but, for your own sake, do not start talking about England there. If you are English and want to be happy in Australia, let them take you to their bosoms first, and they will never do that if you talk in a superior manner, wear superior clothes, or talk about English public schools. They have had too many governors like that. I should also refrain from saying too much about cricket, kangaroos or Potts' Point. If you do get on with them they make the grandest friends in the world, and you will be a "cobber" to any Australian wherever you may find him. If you fail you will be "just another bloody Englishman."

We sail on from Sydney up to Brisbane, through the Torres Straits, past the Celebes to Manila in the Philippine Islands, and on to Hong Kong. Go to the English club there if you wish, but forgive me if I do not accompany you, for I have a strange aversion to all English clubs outside the British Isles. The drink is good, the surroundings are generally of the best, but the conversation is too much for me. Try it yourself and see. We will then go on to Shanghai; another English club there, too. If we are lucky we can meet a few Chinese merchants and officials and try to learn something about what lies west of their town; and you can give vent to your love of the Lord Buddha and your reverence for Confucius and Lao-Tsë. They may tell you sayings and stories of those idols of yours that will fill you with satisfaction, but do not be too gushing, for they do not care very much for Europeans at any time. If I know you, you will want to make the acquaintance of some of those river pirates we read about. I do not think they are all as romantic as you imagine; they are very mercenary, and you run the risk of being captured and held up to ransom—and then what shall I do about it?

What about Peking? Probably you want to go there. You can see the palace that we looted in 1900, and understand a little more clearly why we are still unpopular in that country. The chief cause of the Boxer rising, you recollect, was the Chinese dislike of foreign missionaries, and when you realize that three is a Chinese unlucky number, and the duty of these missionaries was to instil the doctrine of the Trinity into the "heathen Chinese," you will not be surprised at some resentment. I believe the missionaries are hard at work still, but how they have the "face" to go to pagan countries with their own in its present state, in spite of their teaching, is one of many peculiarities in life that I find very difficult to understand. We may have an opportunity of asking one of them, though I expect his answer will be that if you cannot find a fish in one river there is no reason why you should not in another. To query the necessity for fishing at all would be uncharitable.

From Shanghai we go to Yokohama and pay our humble duty to the Japanese, who are as different from the Chinese as Latins are from Teutons. A strange mixture of East and West; a hard-working, intelligent people, given overmuch to nationalism and militarism. They are feared in the Pacific by European Imperialists, and this has led to discrimination against them. The result is the development of the two qualities mentioned, which will not subside until they have either conquered or been defeated in inevitable warfare. They are overcrowded in their little island, for they have seventy-seven million inhabitants in a smaller area than that of the British Isles. They are trying to overflow into Manchuria, but have their eyes on other places as well. You will love the colouring and the cobalt mists, the flowers and shrubs and the quietness; the pattering feet and the little

hiss of greeting. I feel that their destiny is to be greater than they are, and they feel it too very strongly.

Back south we go to Singapore, and here we shall have to change boats if we wish to see Java, and Bali in particular. The Dutch are in power there, and one of their rules is "No missionaries allowed." The people of Bali are unspoiled, as yet, and their land is a veritable paradise of shrubs and waterfalls, long beaches and homes in forests. The Dutch are strict, but are not averse to intermarriage with the natives, and the island is happy and prosperous. The Javanese squat like English miners, whilst the people of Bali seem never to be still, so laughing and happy are they. May they long remain so.

## CHAPTER SIX

India—Of its politics—Of the strange story of Daniel  
Wayland—Kenya—The East Coast—Durban—Cape Town  
—Madeira—Morocco—Algeria—Tunis—Malta—Greece  
—The ancient Greeks—Constantinople—And home again.

WE will not stay long in Ceylon, for we have an important journey before us into the interior of India. We will hurry on to Bombay, capital of the province that is always ruled over by ex-politicians who are either thorns in the flesh of their political party, unpopular in their constituencies, or qualified in some athletic field to be pro-consuls in our Eastern Empire. Bombay is a riot of colour and bustle: the gateway for the West, the Woolworth of India, or anything else you like to call it; a mercenary town, filled with many races, creeds and fancies. We may have the privilege of seeing the Governor himself driving through the town in the new official uniform (transported from Ascot races) of grey morning coat and grey top hat, with a coloured sunshade over his head, held by a bearded native in beautiful clothes. We shall hurry through the bazaar and take a train that goes north-east, being overjoyed to leave Poona well to the south, for Poona I have never been to and cannot believe in, so wonderful are the events said to have happened

there, of which decaying Anglo-Indians have told me. No, son, we are off to Agra to see the most beautiful man-made thing in the world. We shall go by moonlight, and when you see the Taj Mahal you will thank God for having let you see it, and say a prayer for compassion on those of our brothers and sisters who are denied the gift of sight.

We shall notice that the trains are divided into compartments for Europeans and Asiatics, and, as a result of this, probably the Home Rule question will come up for discussion. You shall decide for yourself whether Indians should rule themselves or be ruled by us. You will find Indians a little chary of talking about their national aspirations nowadays, because we are rather fond of getting people who want to rule themselves put in prison, and keeping them a very long time without trial. Naturally this sort of thing breeds sympathy, and since we have started what one might call intensive imprisonment, many thousands of adherents to the national cause have been made. The Imperialists say that if we left India somebody else would take it, or the natives would start fighting among themselves, or the public schools would have nowhere to send their usual quota of officials. The reply to the first is: "Well, let them": to the second is the same, and to the third: "What a pity!" These replies are called sedition by the Imperialists. It is always an interesting thought to me that when Englishmen flock in thousands to defend England from the rule of Germans or French the Englishmen are patriots, but when Indians flock in thousands to protest against their country being ruled by the English, they are called disloyal, seditionists and unpatriotic. You may be able to understand this reasoning, but I am incapable of so doing. Of course



we used the same arguments about North America, South Africa and Ireland, but we are a conservative people, and like to sing the old songs. "*On a toujours eu besoin des Indes, mais les Indes n'ont jamais eu besoin de personne.*" Look this up and see who said it.

If we have time I should like to cross into Nepal, for this independent state is full of interesting customs, combining slavery with a form of communism that deserves study. One custom is perhaps more interesting than most, for it concerns the simplest method of divorce in the world. When a woman has had enough of her husband, all she has to do is to place a betel-nut under his pillow and leave the house. In Europe, of course, there would soon be a monopoly of betel-nut trees, and the managing director would become immensely rich, while the town of Reno in the U.S.A. would sink into obscurity.

Back to Bombay, we will take ship for Aden, the rocky, pink, arid island town of Southern Arabia, which is an important coaling station. Before we get there, however, we may catch a glimpse north-west of Oman of a small island with a strange story. No two people can chart it correctly; some say it is like a mirage and wanders about, so that you are never quite certain when you will come across it. It is called Ardh ez-zrghour, or the "Land of Ghosts," and this is the story that an old sailor told of it, although these are not his own words.

"It was some years ago when the old oil-tanker, *Basra Queen*, gave up its aged frame to a suddenly unkind sea, and as far as Daniel Wayland knew, all the crew except himself perished in the disaster. He, however, managed to keep afloat till the morning on the keel of an upturned ship's boat. The dawn rose in splendour, and above the grey mist

that covered an extremely calm sea he saw the red sky that promised a warm day. The heat of the sun soon warmed and dried Daniel, whereupon he felt better able to look around and wonder where he was. He was beginning to feel rather hopeless, when the mist completely left the sea and a low, sandy island appeared a mile away, straight ahead of him. Oblivious of the sea monsters he slipped off the upturned boat and swam slowly and steadily towards the island, trying at first to tow the boat along behind him, but giving this up after a short time. He landed without mishap, and walked up a sandy shore to inspect the hinterland. The island's sea-bound shores were visible from the top of the shelving beach, and the interior seemed most salubrious, for it consisted of a great hollow abounding in vegetation, with palm trees and tropical flowers in abundance. There was no sign of human habitation, and the stillness seemed to deny the existence of animal or bird life. Daniel descended the slope till he reached the bottom of the valley, when, looking up, he realized that he must really be below sea-level. It was as if he were alone in the crater of an extinct volcano. He walked from one end of the valley to the other, noticing with relief that there were dates on the palms, and a little stream that most surely came from a spring half-way up the opposite slope. He was about to lie down for a sleep when he caught sight of a little hut built of palm fronds, almost buried by flowering shrubs. Examining it, he found nothing to show that it had ever been inhabited—nothing material, that is; one thing, however, surprised him—the imprint of two tiny human feet in the sand on the threshold. Only two footprints, no more. Entering the hut, still wondering, he soon fell into a deep slumber that lasted the whole day. It was dark

when he awoke suddenly, roused by a voice. He listened intently. There it was again. A whisper—a child's whisper: "You did it on purpose: you did: you know you did." And the voice was full of reproach. Daniel was frightened, he did not know why. He could see nothing. In the faint light he noticed the hut was empty, yet he felt that someone else was there. He held his breath, and again the same voice spoke; it came from the doorway. He turned his head to the sound of the whisper, and saw, silhouetted against the night, a little naked child. The sight reassured Daniel, and, not thinking it in the least strange that a child in this outlandish spot could speak English, he asked it what it meant. "You drowned us on purpose: you know you did." "Rubbish," said Daniel, "I've never seen you before." But the only answer was a deep sigh. The child still stayed, and although Daniel could not see its eyes, he felt they were staring straight at him. "Run along home, I want to go to sleep," said Daniel at length, somewhat perturbed at the intensity of the child's gaze; but no answer came. "If you don't go away I shall give you a spanking," was Daniel's next remark, but as the child remained motionless, he rose and went towards it, whereupon it vanished before his very eyes. Daniel's hair stood on end. He ran out into the open and looked round; no little figure was visible. Suddenly from all round him came whispers: "You drowned us all. You did not want us to live, you grown-ups, you know you didn't," said the voices, and it seemed that the whole valley became full of little reproachful children. They were behind trees, behind bushes, round the hut, everywhere. All keeping their distance, and all looking intently at him. This was too much for Daniel. "Go home, the lot of you, this minute," he shouted, by

now really frightened; but none of them moved. Then, in his fear, he began to run at them as if to chase them away, but every time he came near to one it would vanish into thin air and appear farther away, so that Daniel ran about like a lunatic, shouting and raving, while the whispers went on all round him. He stopped running, and passed his hand across his clammy forehead. "The water's coming," whispered a voice, "and you will be drowned too." Daniel spun round, and there, sure enough, the lip of the crater appeared to be rising up, and up, and suddenly a great rush of water poured down into the valley. From all sides the sea came in. There was a tearing and uprooting of trees, a mighty rushing, and Daniel felt himself lifted by the water, and remembered nothing more until he awoke in a bunk of a sister oil-tanker that had picked him exhausted out of the sea. When Daniel told the story at Aden to some English-speaking visitors, they told him this was the island "where all children drowned at sea came to play, but it is only an island occasionally; generally after shipwreck time." I think the children had wanted to live and had not been allowed to."

We shall change boats at Aden and make for Kilindini Harbour, land at Mombasa, and go up to Nairobi to see something of upper-class English settlers who are busy growing coffee, sissal and timber. The population on the coast is of Arab stock and Indian: in the interior Kavirondo, Lumbwa, Masai and also Indian. These latter want equal rights with the European stock, but do not look like getting them. You will hear a lot of political hot air talked here by all sides, and if you are nice and polite to the settlers, and they do not discover that you have not been to an English public school, you may be invited to visit them on

their "shambas." I want you to see Lake Victoria Nyanza in the evening and the Rift Valley in the morning. You will like the European settlers here; they are young and keen, but have not quite shaken off their upbringing sufficiently to understand that profits from the soil do not arrive without hard work.

From Mombasa we shall sail south and touch at Dar-es-Salaam, the capital of Tanganyika, the old German colony. This colony has not shown the marked improvement that was expected of it after it changed hands, and under our rule, I am sorry to say, much of the botanical and zoological research work that was so well carried out by German scientists before the 1914 war has ceased.

South again, we come to Portuguese East Africa, and calling at Mozambique, Beira and Lourenço Marques we shall find malaria-ridden towns, superb sea-bathing, no colour bar, and a cheerful, happy-go-lucky population. We might drop in at the little music-hall at Beira and hear rather risky but very melodious Portuguese songs. We shall hear more Portuguese music later on in Madeira, and with any luck we might hear Portuguese "fardoes" sung to a guitar accompaniment. I sometimes think these old folk-songs are the most beautiful in the world; they are sad and lilting, and the tunes are well marked and not too much alike. In them Portugal speaks of love, with a faint regret for her past glories at sea. Other tunes are bright and cheerful: grand folk-dancing tunes alternating between a tango rhythm and a "gopak."

This east coast of Africa looks very lovely from the sea. Many little rivers come tumbling into the ocean, bearing wondrous tales of the hinterland and the wild animals that

have drunk from their waters. Delagoa Bay is so named because of the Portuguese dependency Goa on the west coast of India, whence came the Indian people into the African colony. The Goanese seem to have been decreed by fate to remain Government clerks all their lives, and consequently their outlook resembles that of the English suburban lower middle class. You will notice in this part of the world, if you have not done so before, how the sun sets; the manner of its setting is quite different here from its way in the northern hemisphere. There is no twilight; the sun seems tired with its own heat and hurries down the sky till it touches the sea. Now it seems that the sea quenches the fire, for rapidly the sun loses its shape, is cut in half, and finally disappears almost with a sizzle, so that you imagine its light has been extinguished altogether. Really it is playing a game, hurrying round to catch us in the morning almost before we have time to say "good night."

Farther south we meet the Union of South Africa in the prosperous colony of Natal; we shall land at the capital of the province amid a fleet of ships and dock activity. Durban is a happy town with square, white buildings and many trees, its population chiefly Scotsmen, Zulu rickshaw-drivers and Indians, descendants of those brought in to labour in the early sugar days of the province. There are also Chinese, many of whom came over after the last South African war to supply cheap labour to the colony.

Shall we go up to the Rand, and stay for a day or two in Johannesburg, whose wealth was one of the primary causes of the 1899-1902 war? If so, in this dusty town we shall see black and white striving to draw mineral wealth

from the earth for the economic existence of the former, and the economic prosperity of the latter. Johannesburg has been the scene of many a sanguinary battle between strikers and strike-breakers, and is a perfect example of the material wealth and human misery that the economic system seems always to mix together. Vast fortunes have been made here, and the mining of gold, which is its chief source of profit, has a very direct bearing on the world's economic distress of the present day, for the basis of the monetary unit being gold, and money being the basis of exchange for the exchange of commodities, we can see how powerful the owners of this source of wealth can become.

We will go south to Cape Town via Kimberley, where the diamonds come from, Ladysmith and Worcester. We will circle the base of Table Mountain, and before long, walking the length of Adderley Street, shall feel that we are in the sort of small Middle-Western township we have seen so often on the films, for the pavement is overhung by the first stories of the shops, which are supported by wooden pillars that rest on the kerb-stones. We shall have time to see the old Dutch Parliament house, now an exquisitely kept museum with a perfect little garden behind, backed by a blue mosaic of delightful pattern and shape, set low in the red-bricked wall. The South Africans will appeal to us strongly. They are fine people in appearance, but whether of English, Scotch or Dutch stock I, for one, can never be sure until they speak. Then I know; for the Dutch are bilingual and our people are not. The consequence is that the Dutch have the monopoly of Government appointments, which annoys the British. We could look in during a sitting of the Parliament there, if you wish, and we might

catch a glimpse of Uncle Lewis striding rapidly towards the leadership of the South African Party. Both Dutch and English are spoken in this Parliament, and we may recognize a few of the members as those who strove so hard at the beginning of this century to keep us from over-running the whole of South Africa.

When we leave Cape Town by boat we shall travel due north-west, leaving Table Mountain probably covered by its cloth of white cloud, and make for Madeira as our first stop, passing, away on our right, the old German South-West Africa, now ruled by the Union under a mandate; Angola, which belongs to Portugal; Gabon, which is French; the Cameroons (ex-German, now under French mandate); Nigeria; Ashanti; Liberia, the independent black state colonized by freed slaves from the United States of America; Sierra Leone; Gambia; Senegal; and the Spanish Gold Coast. Odd bits of Spain and Portugal seem to come and go at different places, and you shall look them all up on the map and have an examination on them in Reid's Hotel when we land in Madeira. By the way, it has just struck me that I missed the pleasure of seeing you land in a basket at East London, which is an amusing incident in a really rough sea. In Madeira I suppose you will want to ride about in those terrifying basket sledges with wooden runners, but do not expect me to come, for the rate of descent is too much for my nerves.

From Madeira we go east to the Moroccan coast and land at Casablanca; there we can take a French car and travel to Fez and Meknes, two of the most beautiful towns in the world, to make the acquaintance of the Moors, who are of mixed Arab and Berber blood. These fine-looking fellows are the descendants of the Corsairs, or raiding pirates



of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, who even went so far as to sail up the Bristol Channel and make raids off the coast of Ireland. A brave but cruel race, they have been carrying on continual warfare against the Spanish and French for years past. We can watch snake-charmers and acrobats, Arab dances and fortune-telling, and listen to their flutes and their accompaniment—the hand drum. Here you may begin to learn the Arabic alphabet, so that you can understand the names on the shop signs, and eventually read your Suras out of the Koran, although it will be a long time before you can translate them.

From Fez we journey by car to Oran, the port of debarkation for the Foreign Legion, about which are woven so many fanciful tales of romance and glory. Oran is a dirty place, and we shall be glad to leave it behind. Now comes a most glorious ride inland, and then back to the turquoise coast, passing the old Roman towns of Cherchell and Tipaza (where your great-uncle has a tiny “ marabout ”), and then on to Algiers, where we will stay a while to make a “ ’sploration ” into the Sahara. To get there we enter a car once more and pass through Bou-Saada (where your father once lived for many months and learnt what little he knows of Arabs, their language and religion), Biskra, Touggourt, and then into the sand. We will camp out under the stars in the sand, and build a wreath of palm-fronds round us which we will set alight. And we will bring an Arab boy with us to play “ la Habibi ” on his flute, and put him a dune away, so that that lovely tune can come to us out of the night. The sky seems made of purple velvet, and I can understand what an Arab boy meant when he told me he was singing “ to the holes in the great big blue cloth, singing to the holes where the light

shines through." When you are old, and I am very old, I shall go to live in this country of Algeria, and you shall come over and scatter my ashes from the top of the Aures mountains when I have left my body. And you shall commend my soul to Him who gave it and recite my "Credo," and that will be all. Why this morbidity? No reason, son, except that my thoughts are leaping ahead as usual, when they ought to be with you travelling happily in Algeria.

We must look at Tunisia before leaving North Africa, but shall not find it so varied. We will motor there; you will thus be able to see the Kabylie country, where the villages are made of stone instead of mud, and perched high on the hills with blossoming fruit trees before them. The Kabyles are more beautiful than the Arabs, but their dogs are more vicious. The French rule Algeria with great sense. There is no racial distinction; French and Arabs work side by side as labourers, artisans, soldiers or teachers. Tunisia, a French Protectorate, is ruled by a bey who dresses very gorgeously, and distributes shining medals with as much freedom as the French. The villas of Tunis possess most beautiful tiles, covered with holy script, and I am always amazed because they look so much more attractive than our efforts to do the same thing—which generally result in a badly printed card, margined by impossible-looking flowers exhorting us to "Love one another"; even our landlady, in whose bedrooms these texts are generally to be found.

From Tunis we will take a Dutch cargo-boat, if possible, and make for Valletta harbour in Malta. Here part of the English fleet will be busily engaged in longing to get back to Plymouth or Portsmouth or Chatham. Our boat may

go next to Palermo in Sicily, and, passing Messina, we can see Etna quietly smoking her pipe and looking much more lovely than she really is. Thence to the Greek islands—Cerigo and Milos—and into the harbour at Piræus. How this place smells! Athens is a very short drive away; we go there by Phaleron Bay along a very dusty road. In the town we stumble on large chunks of old Grecian masonry, but we shall not see them in their glory till we climb the Acropolis. Here is great beauty; great, peaceful beauty at all hours of the day or night. We will stand and sigh because we have not yet returned the stolen caryatid to the Erechtheum, and stand and remember all that we ever heard of the history of ancient Greece. We will imagine we are watching the crowds rushing down to the Piræus to welcome Alcibiades back from Sparta. We can just discern him on his flagship, smiling with the same old smile that endeared him to Socrates, and thinking, in his heart of hearts, of the frailties of the crowd that would hound him from Athens for desecrating a statute, and take him to their hearts for fighting against them. Did you realize before the similarity between the ancient Greek democracy and ours? I did not till this minute; but there you have it, in the history of Alcibiades, the beautiful soldier hero of days gone by, traitor and lover, iconoclast and orator. Or again, imagine the crowd just below us applauding, roaring with laughter and loving the satire of a new play by Aristophanes—there, down in the theatre, which still stands in all its original beauty. Then we may be waiting for the return of Ulysses, who, we hear, is bringing Hecuba, Priam's wife, back from Troy. We might even rush to the shore to see this famous beauty, only to discover that she had drowned herself at Cyneum, on her way to an alien land. Vain memories, but

great fun. You will see the Acropolis by moonlight. You must do that.

Our journeyings are coming to an end, and rather sadly we take ship to Constantinople, passing the lovely little islands of Chios and Mytelene, and seeing Lemnos, where Rupert Brooke lies buried, away to the west. Going through the Dardanelles we remember the slaughter that ignorant and incompetent officials caused in 1915, and shall once more pledge ourselves to the cause of peace, and pray for the consciences of those who sent men there to be slain. You will be excited when you first see the minarets of Stamboul, and Constantinople will appear dirty and squalid, for even the picturesqueness of the "tarbush" has given way to the universality of the Homburg hat. We will visit the Jardin des Petits Champs, most interesting of cafés, and listen to ten or eleven languages being spoken in as many minutes. You shall see the Ottoman Bank where the Armenian revolutionaries were betrayed by the great powers, and the docks where the Armenian womenfolk drowned themselves and their babies during the massacre. There, also, stands the little Greek hotel where your father stayed when he had only enough money for one meal a day, but I shall not show you the wooden bed, each leg of which was a barracks housing a battalion of bed-bugs that used to come out on a foraging expedition the moment the candle was extinguished.

We now enter the Orient express for the last lap of our world excursion, and pass through Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, Hungary, Austria, Italy, Switzerland and France. It is an interesting journey, and, among so many different peoples, should afford food for thought and knowledge. Most educated Balkan people talk French or German. When

you see the white cliffs of Dover you may feel excited, or you may not: it depends how firmly rooted is your love of home. I am a wanderer by nature. My home is wherever I am. I shall be interested to see how you react. Will you enjoy your trip? I shall. In fact, I have enjoyed travelling on paper already.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

Of Economics—Patriotism—Conservatism—Law—Church  
—Titles and funny things—Of politicians—Militarism—  
Murder — Internationalism — Nationalism — Persecution —  
The lovely story of the three staircases.

THIS world, you will find, is run in an extremely illogical manner, and the more you think about it the more amazed you will be that it functions at all. It will be sufficient for our purposes to confine ourselves as much as possible to this country, which is more illogically run than most. The first really important thing you come up against is that the world is full of machinery to make things, raw materials for the machines, people to work the machines, and people to consume the things made; yet the machines are idle, the workers are unemployed and people are starving. This is the greatest question of the hour, and this condition has been brought about by a false economic system, based on bad mathematics, known as industrial capitalism; it is meant to be founded on a "science" called Economics, but, as a matter of fact, it grew up of itself without form or order, and a set of rules was clapped on top of it. There are no cast-iron laws in this "Economics." There are one or two instances of common sense, certainly, but this new incomprehensible and fatuous "science" is but a jumble of methods for the more or less faulty working of that system of industrial and financial society which we seem to prefer. The first reason why the

system does not work is that the medium of exchange known as "money" is not sufficient in itself, nor sufficiently spread around to enable actual or potential production to be consumed. Therefore, as there is not sufficient money in the pockets of potential consumers, there is no demand for goods and no demand for labour to produce those goods. The second and subsidiary reason is that putting money into production without putting even more into consumption naturally stops the economical wheel of production, distribution and consumption from turning round. The third and also subsidiary reason is the system of interest which acts like a vampire on production and the supply of money, for every time interest is paid you are mortgaging the future—promising to pay as interest an amount of the medium of exchange not yet in existence. This most vital subject of money I will leave to the next chapter, but even then I shall not bother to give the solution on paper, for you and I both know what it is. The tendency all over the world to-day is towards Socialist Economics, whether it be in Russia, Italy and Germany under Fascism, or England with its State control of broadcasting, electricity undertakings and trade bargaining. I will therefore leave the purely economic or technical method of running things and get on to the ethical side.

You must realize that the ethical struggle in the country is chiefly confined to two attitudes of mind—the Conservative and the Radical: the mind that is content with things as they are and the reformist mind. Of course there are many instances of greater or less degrees of Conservatism and Radicalism being present in the same mental make-up, but for clarity I will take the pure attitudes of mind. One subject very much to the fore at the moment

goes by the name of patriotism. Now this is extremely difficult to define, so I will make it easier by saying that those who call themselves patriots consider that I, your father, am unpatriotic. To put my attitude on paper is simple, and you will therefore be able to decide which "patriotism" you prefer.

1. I consider it finer to live for your country than to die for your country; chiefly because I am incapable of deciding which country I like best. I see so much good and so much bad in all of them. I do not own a square inch of England, but because I was born in it and have absorbed its atmosphere, I want it to be a good and happy place.

2. I am not impressed by the possession of vast tracts of land that make up "our" Empire, or by the fact that we rule over millions of alien people by the power of military force.

3. My object in public life is to see that the vast mass of the people in this country get enough to eat, are decently housed, sufficiently clad, have congenial work, and access to those forms of recreation and knowledge that they prefer. And that is the "patriotism" I advocate. To me it is the primary material duty of public life and expression, and anything that stands in its way I oppose.

4. For holding these views I am unpatriotic; because I do not consider that materialism, flag worship, tradition and pride of imperial possession should come before that which I have expressed in the former paragraph.

Now, those who disagree with me look upon my views, when publicly expressed by anyone, as "sedition," and when they are hinted at in our national schools, the Conservative mind becomes easily upset and insists that only the Conservative creed should be taught. You may ask why this is.



I cannot explain, except that the Conservative mind fears that my point of view would take the country away from the material control of those who own it. It is not that the Conservative would not like my paragraph 3 to be a reality, but that he fears it could only become a reality by a change in the economic system which might leave him less materially prosperous. Insomuch is the Conservative creed a selfish one, for it places the material interests of the few above those of the many. Before 1921, when unemployment began in earnest, most intelligent Conservatives believed it possible to accomplish my paragraph 3 within the bounds of the capitalist system. They see now that it is impossible; but instead of modifying capitalism to save the principals of rent, interest and profit, they waste their time in denouncing loudly those who for years past have said it was impossible. In this attitude of mind the capitalists remind me of the "Curetes"; as you remember, they were priests of Jupiter who lived in Crete and had the care of the infant Zeus. In order to conceal him from Kronos, his father, they spent their time banging their cymbals together whenever he approached in order to drown the cries of the child.

This sedition business has another interesting side to it. Should the Germans desire to rule the English, it is considered imperative that all Englishmen should fight to prevent this happening. This is known as patriotism. But should the English wish to rule the Irish or the Egyptians or the Indians, and the natives of those countries fight to prevent it happening, it is called sedition. During the war Masaryk of Austria was hailed by us as a patriot because he strove against his emperor and empire for the freedom of Czecho-Slovakia. Roger Casement was called a traitor for striving against his king and empire for the freedom of

Ireland. Masaryk was feted by us. Casement was shot by us. This is all impossible to understand, and I dare not attempt an explanation.

In order to bolster up the system of society under which we live, two institutions exist side by side. One is the Law and the other the National Church. The Law, which is the opinion of the dead as to how the living are to behave, is an institution which enables you to receive justice, if you are able to pay for it, when someone or other disagrees with you about your rights or wrongs. The Church, which is the opinion of dead men on God, is an institution that has made a good living out of the reported actions and sayings of Jesus Christ which it has no earthly intention of following. Of this more anon.

There are other methods of binding people to the established order of things, such as the existence of kings and peers, lesser titles and medals, though I must say that in the latter respect the French Republic can beat us hollow. It is extraordinary in Paris how many grey-bearded men you meet who possess the Legion of Honour. I once got into trouble for offering a drink to the only bearded man I had ever seen there who did not possess it. He turned out to be a Russian. Really, the only reason people like to wear medals is the fear that other people might not know they were important. You may fancy that I am making too much of a small thing, but it is more significant than you might think at first, for the distribution of titles and medals creates distinctions which produce false values. What a man is called, what he wears, what he possesses, hide from the eyes of the world what he is, what he feels, what he does. There should be no desire for rewards for duty done to our fellow men. Let the reward come from the God-given

satisfaction. Let the reverence for a human king and human lords be turned into reverence for the spiritual King and the qualities of goodness that He has instilled into the unveiling Soul of man. I do so protest against the substitution of material reward for human good. Do you see what I mean? I feel that all this "ballyhoo" (to use an apposite Americanism) about royalty and "Society" comes from people for whom God is not sufficient. I know that people love something to look up to and follow. But they have their God and they have the beauty and goodness of individuals to adore, without needing to have their reverence diverted towards those who, not necessarily possessing any of these qualities, are honoured above their fellow men by heredity or sycophancy. I never quite understood how our military leaders during the late war, having been paid higher than most people, could bring themselves to accept, at the termination of hostilities, those large sums of money as an extra bonus for doing their job.

We do a lot of things without much thought, taking so much for granted and never bothering. It always amazes me to see people take their hats off to a passing coffin, when it would probably have been the last thing they would have done to the lucky fellow if he had been alive. Flowers for the dead and weeds for the living. It is a strange creed. You might imagine it was a gesture of repentance, and that if those who thus salute had their time over again with the dead, they would have been kinder to them. Maybe it is that. Most people are led to believe that after death people enter into "everlasting glory." That is the creed of the Church. Yet when you die people will clothe themselves in black and mourn for you. Would you not imagine that in order to keep in harmony with the teaching you have absorbed, you

should be glad and shout with joy at the honour that some friend has gained?

The political world will astonish you. You will see people advocate some course of action time and time again, and then go and do exactly the opposite without a word of explanation as to their reasons. You will see men change their parties and principles several times in a short while, and then be entrusted with the governing of the country. The man who is reviled to-day can also be cheered to-morrow, even if he has not swerved one iota from his life's objective. I have seen Bernard Shaw acclaimed by the same people who jeered at him twenty years ago; Ramsay MacDonald, despised and rejected for his pacifism, welcomed into the homes of the great because he has reached the highest office in the land. I have seen the clergy preach love and goodwill towards men one minute and urge men to slaughter in the Great War the next; blessing drums in the name of God, dedicating guns in the name of Christ, and hanging in their cathedrals the war-standards of militarism in the name of the Holy Ghost. And we wonder why the world is in such a mess.

We have peculiar ideas of divorce in this country, in which legislation is much in favour of the woman, and our police force is largely promoted on the strength of the number of arrests made. In order to effect these the police are encouraged to make crime. Only the other day, for instance, a plain-clothes policeman ordered some indecent post cards from a small stationer. The stationer said he did not possess any. Could he obtain them? asks the policeman. He might, replies the shopkeeper. Five times did this policeman call at the shop and repeat his request, and when finally the post cards were forthcoming the shop-

keeper was hauled to the court and charged with selling indecent post cards. Other similar cases occur in connection with the liquor laws; a policeman can enter a public-house after hours, order a drink, and then charge the publican with selling illegally. Women police are also employed to go to spiritualist mediums, pay a fee and ask to have their fortune told. The medium is then charged with so doing. Of course, these are petty offences, but it has never struck our rulers to tackle the causes and not the results of crime. Ninety-five per cent. of all crime is connected with private property, and yet no effort is made to see that national security is assured to all the people in the country.

We still have capital punishment. We still believe it is wrong to kill in hot blood and right to kill in cold blood, for we hang our murderers, not to prevent crime, but in revenge. It always seemed such bad luck to teach people for four and a half years that it was right to kill, and then come down with all the force of the law on those who continued it a little too long. Murder, to me, seems so alien to Humanity that I am inclined to consider all murderers insane. Others accept murder as part of the natural course of things. I should like to see them all in lunatic asylums, treated psychologically in an effort to cure them. You might say, why bother to keep such people alive? I answer that it is our privilege to look after those who are afflicted, and that since the object of life is the development of the human Soul, we have no right to cut off the means whereby It can progress. To struggle with the Soul that has been completely veiled by insanity seems to me a more noble work than to pray for salvation for someone who has made off with a loaf of bread. It is this denial of the chance for the human Soul to develop that makes me a pacifist and opponent of

war. I dare say one might think it a good thing to deplete the population from time to time, but in so doing we are tampering with what is divine, and I am not prepared to do it.

There is growing up in this country at the moment a reaction to freedom of expression. Since the war normal action and reaction has increased to such a speed that a point of view is hardly accepted when the opposite point of view begins to claim acceptance in its turn. You will find the Conservative mind intent on preventing at all costs the expression of thought contrary to its own. People insist that children must not be taught Socialism or Christianity or Internationalism, but instead must be taught Conservatism, Churchianity and Nationalism. I have never objected to your learning the last three, but I do object when I am told I should not teach you about the first three. I teach you without fear or favour that Socialism means the fruit of the toil of the world for the world in proportion to its individual needs, and I teach you that Conservatism means the fruit of the toil of the world in proportion to the amount of monetary investment put into it. I teach you that Christianity means following the teaching and life of Jesus Christ, and that Churchianity means following the teaching of a Church. I teach you that Internationalism is a sympathy for all countries and peoples and a realization that we are all children of one God, irrespective of class, creed or colour. I teach you that Nationalism means England's Government, right or wrong—except a Socialist Government, and that is always wrong—a realization of the superiority of Englishmen over different coloured races, men of different religion and those speaking foreign tongues. I do not insist that you should hold all three of each set, nor do I insist that

you should hold any. I tell you what they are; it is for you to make your choice. Eighteen years of my life had passed before I heard the word Socialism, and twenty years before I knew the tenets of any religion other than those expressed in the services of the Church of England. You are not so ignorant. You will hear apparently intelligent people who know the difference between Tariff Reform and Free Trade, or between turnips and swedes, showing by their remarks a complete ignorance of any of the principles of Communism, Anarchism, Nihilism or Syndicalism; and you will realize with Joshua Billings that "It ain't so much people's ignorance wot does the harm, it's so many people knowing wot ain't so."

I am telling you of all these peculiarities for two reasons: firstly, if you think they are wrong I want you to strive to alter them; and secondly, I want future generations to be able to read back in history and get a knowledge of what went on in England in 1933. The world is seething with discontent, and I know how easy it is to say that the things I mention are of no consequence; but it is easier and better in the present state of affairs to remove the branches before you fell the tree. The other way can only come as a result of complete revolution. The old radical tradition of freedom of conscience and expression is being assailed from many quarters; from the extreme left as much as the extreme right; and I want you to be a champion of liberty above all things. Oppose persecution wherever you find it. Stand up for the weak, though not necessarily agreeing with them. Silence evil tongues that slander and cause mischief, and never lose for one second the vision of a happier country. That happier country should be the vision of all youth,

and if only they would keep it clear before them and not let it become dimmed by selfishness or materialism, what a rapid change there could be! Did I ever tell you the story of the three staircases? Here it is, and I want you to draw the moral from it. It has a bearing on false values.

“There was once a very rich man who lived in a prosperous town in Lancashire. It was prosperous because a great deal of money came into it and many rich men lived there. Of course there were a lot of very poor ones, in fact a great many more poor than rich, but we need not think of that, as we are only concerned with the strange adventure of one of the multitude—an extremely rich man who was an alderman of his borough and had paid £45,253 6s. 3½d. for his title of Baronet.

Really the actual title had only cost £45,253, but he had spent six shillings in taxis when he went to see about it, twopence for the cheque with which he paid for it, and a penny halfpenny for the stamp on the letter enclosing the cheque. They say he had to pay more still for certain patents, but that is a little matter.

Now this rich man was very kind. He gave a subscription to this and a subscription to that, and he went to church every Sunday, and took off his hat to the poor people who touched their caps to him, for, you see, his wife was with him and she wore lovely furs.

But it happened, as happens to all men, that he grew sick and died; and many people came to the funeral, and a large tombstone setting forth his virtues was raised over the grave; and very soon everything went on as if nothing at all had happened, though perhaps the town became a little



poorer, for his great fortune had been divided up among his children a few months before he died. . . .

Now, a day or two after his death, the dead baronet found himself in a strange place. He found himself facing a great golden staircase, and at his feet were great smoky clouds. He looked up, and as far as his eyes could see the golden staircase towered above him.

"Well," thought he, "I suppose I've got to climb these stairs. I wonder . . ." And just then a voice called out quite cheerfully: "Come on up, old chap." So he started to climb the stairs.

When he had been climbing for about five seconds, he noticed that on both sides were lines of white-draped figures smiling at him, and they had great grey wings that moved ever so slowly, like the leaves of a great tree in a summer's breeze.

As he looked at them they smiled, and he thought how pleasant they seemed, just like his friends in the bar of the local Constitutional club; but as they said nothing, he went on climbing. He was surprised how easy this was, since in the old days he had been much troubled with gout. Up he went, higher and higher; some of the faces he saw reminded him of old friends, and some he had never seen before and was not quite certain if he ever wanted to see again. When he reached what he imagined should be about half-way (for there was a little level stretch), he heard the sound of merry music and the strains of "Land of Hope and Glory," followed by "For He's a Jolly Good Fellow."

The sounds were pleasant to his ear. He had once given a prize for singing at the Grammar School in his old town, so he knew something about music.

However, on he went and the music was nicer than ever.

A little jazz reached his ears, and he thought of the noise of his factories, where the cotton had been made into thread, and how sad it was that he would not see them again. He hoped they were working hard. . . . But what did it matter to him, now he was dead. . . . Dead? Yes, he was certainly dead; he remembered dying, and perhaps this was heaven. Of course it was, here were the angels. "I wonder who will be at the top of these stairs," he thought. "God, perhaps." No doubt it would be God, waiting to judge him; and he had not got a copy of his obituary notice to show Him. Never mind, God would know a business man when He saw one; would know how much he had done for the Empire.

So, unperturbed, he climbed the last few steps and looked up. Was there ever such a wonderful sight? There, on a beautiful high throne, sat a lovely young man with curly hair smiling at him. "This, at last, is God," thought the rich man. "I always knew he hadn't got a beard. Such rubbish." And he looked round him and there were more angels, great tall, handsome ones who must be directors or something very important.

"Hello," said the glorious Being on the throne.

The rich man bowed.

"Welcome, I've been waiting for you a long time. I hope you didn't find the stairs too steep."

"No, thank you, sir. I used to suffer from gout, but it seems to have vanished. It's very kind of you, I'm sure, to welcome me like this," and the rich man stood first on one foot and then on the other, for he was rather nervous. He did not know what was coming next.

"Well?" asked the glorious Being.

The rich man cleared his throat.

"I suppose, sir, I've got to be judged. . . . I should like to say I did pretty well on earth. I . . ."

"I know all about you. We are very pleased with your work indeed."

The rich man blushed.

"It's very good of you, sir," he stammered. "I never knew heaven could be such a friendly place."

"Heaven?" said the glorious Being, raising his eyebrows.

"This is . . . er . . . heaven?"

"Good Lord, no," laughed the young man. "This is hell and I'm Satan."

And there were shrieks of merriment all up and down the staircase, and the music played "The more we are together, the merrier we shall be."

There was another man who was very holy. He was a clergyman, and held many services and many tea-parties. He always took the chair at the meetings when the squire came to speak to the villagers and tell them whom they must vote for at election times.

He held very beautiful services with long candles and much smell, and he bowed and crossed himself so often that strangers thought he had a palsy.

But it so happened that he also grew sick and died, heavily fortified by the rites of his church. And when he was dead everyone was very sad and said he was bound to go straight to heaven. Only the squire seemed untroubled; he said he did not care where the devil the clergyman went because he always thought the sermons were far too long.

Now, a day or two after his death, the dead clergyman found himself in a strange place. He found himself facing a great golden staircase, and at his feet were great smoky

clouds. He also looked up, and as far as his eyes could see the golden staircase towered above him.

"Well," he thought, "I wonder what I ought to do." And he felt for his prayer-book and his Bible and his little book on what to say and his little book on what to do, but he could not find them.

"I don't think I'd better do anything without authority," he said, half aloud; and just then a voice called out: "Will the reverend gentleman come upstairs." But the clergyman hesitated.

"I cannot without authority," he called out at length.

And then there was a great murmuring of voices, and a voice, which the clergyman could not hear, said: "Give me that old hat, quick, and that stick with the hook and that cloak. Hurry up!" And suddenly before the clergyman's eyes appeared a bishop, clad in vestments, be-mitred and carrying his pastoral crook, who stood on the bottom step but three.

"Good morning, my lord . . ." began the clergyman, but the bishop interrupted him and said:

"Come on up, quick. What the hell do you want to keep us waiting for, old chap?"

"I'm very sorry," replied the clergyman, who now knew it was a bishop, "I'll come up at once."

And forthwith he began to mount the steps; but the bishop disappeared.

When he had been climbing for about five seconds, he noticed that on both sides were lines of white-draped figures, some ringing bells and some swinging incense-burners from side to side, and sometimes they did not swing all the same way, and they crashed together and strange puffs of strange-smelling smoke came out in clouds.

As he looked at them they hung their heads, and he thought how holy they seemed, just like his own choir in the stalls of his church. So he climbed and climbed, and when he arrived about half-way (for there was a little level stretch), he heard the sound of music and the strains of one of the more attractive church pieces by Stainer, the great Victorian musician.

The sounds were pleasant to his ear. He had always encouraged good music. It had been so necessary to create the proper atmosphere for his services. However, on he went, and the music was nicer than ever. A new organ piece reached his ears. He thought he would like to know its name so that he could introduce it when he returned. . . . Returned? But he was dead, surely. He was going to be judged. Yes, of course. St. Peter would be there. . . . Was that bishop St. Peter, by any chance? Where was he? Gone: no matter; he would speak to him later. This must be the same staircase Jacob saw. . . . No, his was a ladder, wasn't it? He ought to have been prepared for this staircase. Perhaps there was a reference to it in one of the apocryphal books that we do not read nowadays. He had certainly read nothing of this. The incense was getting stronger, for the incense-bearers were not very adept and there was much clashing together. He must be nearly there. At last. He had reached the spot. He raised his eyes. It was certainly the top of the stairs, but . . . there was nothing; absolutely nothing; simply empty space.

The clergyman looked round. There was no one. And suddenly the music started again and played "Tell me the old, old story."

There was yet a third man who was a great lover. He

was neither poor nor rich, yet when the rich spoke of him they sniffed, and when the poor spoke of him they shrugged their shoulders. You see, he was a great lover, and because he had not loved according to the laws of the rich, and because he had not loved in the way the poor had been ordered to love, he was an outcast.

No one knew who he was, and when they saw him being kind and loving to everybody they said: "This is a very charming man, is he not?" or "'E ain't arf a bad chap," but as soon as they heard how he had loved, they all became sheep again, and "baa-ed" with the rest. But it happened that he also grew sick and died, and many missed his little kindnesses and his smile, but they did not say so.

Now, a day or two after his death, the dead man found himself in a strange place, facing a great golden staircase, and at his feet were great smoky clouds. He looked up, and as far as his eyes could see the golden staircase towered above him.

"Well," thought he, "there doesn't seem any other way, so here goes," and he started to go up the stairs.

When he had been climbing for about five seconds, he noticed that on both sides were lines of white-draped figures looking straight before them, and thought how like they were to the twelve silent men he had watched as he stood at the prisoner's bar all those long years ago.

But he went on, for there was nowhere else to go.

When he reached where he imagined would be about half-way (for there was a little level stretch), he heard the sound of music and the strains of an unfamiliar tune.

The sounds were pleasant to his ear. He had never known much about music, but he knew what he liked, as so many of us do.

He would like to hear that tune again. Perhaps he would to-morrow. . . . But he was dead, wasn't he? Yes, thank goodness. Now for the next step. What was this place? Could it be he was going to be judged? Well, his punishment couldn't be worse than what he had gone through. Carry on. It couldn't be much farther. His feet reached the level once more. He was at the top. He raised his eyes. The light was shining. . . . The music was too glorious. . . . Never had he heard such music; and suddenly there came a godly voice, and he was filled with much joy. . . ."

## CHAPTER EIGHT

The strange story of the madness that came over the world  
—Money—All about it—Pages of it.

I WANT to explain money to you to-day, and I have made it as clear as possible, so that you will see quite easily where the fault lies, and why the system does not work. I will write it most simply, so that your friends can also understand. It is in the form of a story.

This, then, is the story of the strange madness that came over the world many years ago, and is responsible for the uncertain position of the peoples of the world to-day. When I have told the story, we will discuss it, and in the end we shall be wiser and better citizens.

“Ever so long before machinery and cinemas, or wine and waffles, two happy communities lived on an island side by side in perfect harmony. They kept sheep and goats, cattle and horses, and they sowed and reaped and made food so that they could keep alive. From the skins of their dead animals they obtained shoes and clothing and suits, and from the rocks that abounded fashioned stones to build houses. The children gathered rushes and reeds, which they used as torches, and flint and iron gave them fire. They made weapons and instruments, and with these they husbanded. One day the devil (who is never very far away from happy folk) was working out a little mathematical problem with



a small stick in the sand. To be exact, he was adding up figures and striving hard to make two and two into five, because he thought if he could once discover how this was done he would have immense power, and be able to cause unhappiness and dissension among these two happy communities. Suddenly he gave a chuckle, for the idea had come to him.

“ ‘ Figures ! ’ he thought to himself. ‘ When on the sand they cannot be used at all, can they? But if those figures are *things*, then two and two can make five, because *things* can be used.’ And he worked it out very carefully, and did not tell anyone what he was going to do, nor how he was going to do it. Anyway, this is what he did.

“ He caused a man named Ban-Ker to go amongst the people of the island and watch and see how one man would come along with two sheep to what was called a Mar-Ket, and there he would exchange his two sheep with another man for so much corn, which he would carry away with him to his home. And again someone would exchange a leather pelt for a rudely fashioned axe, or a woman would exchange some pretty-coloured stones for a dye called woad, to make her woollen coat look bright and pleasant to the eye. And Ban-Ker had an idea (although he did not know that the devil had given it him), and as he was not very industrious himself, the more he thought over it the better it appeared. For two days no one saw Ban-Ker. He shut himself in his house and hammered and hammered away at pieces of white metal he had found in his field. On the third day he called all the people to him and made them a speech.

“ ‘ Brothers,’ he said, ‘ I have seen you heavily laden going to Mar-Ket and exchanging goods for goods, and

sometimes you know quite well that you don't need as much corn as you get for your one sheep, and sometimes you get too many pieces of iron to make weapons from exchanging a single pelt. Now I have an idea. Here I have a lot of wonderful bright pieces of metal that you have never seen before because they only grow in my field, and I call them Sil-Ver. Now if I give you each ten of these pieces you can use them to exchange your goods with. One of these pieces is worth one sheep. . . .'

" 'Why?' asked a voice from the back.

" 'Because,' replied Ban-Ker (not in the least put out), 'I've worked it out that way. But the idea is extremely difficult to understand, and is subject to the laws of supply and demand, high Fin-Ance, the economic situation and the possibilities of an economic blizzard.'

"The people nodded their heads like people still do to-day when they hear long words, but nobody understood what he meant, and as for the two new words, Sil-Ver and Fin-Ance, these were almost like names of gods.

" 'One of these pieces is worth one sheep,' continued Ban-Ker. 'Two are worth two sheep, and so on. You know how much iron or stone or wood or wool you exchange now for one sheep; well, in future, this one piece of Sil-Ver will be the same standard as one sheep.' And see'—here he showed another pile of Sil-Ver that was smaller—'two of these little pieces mean one big piece.'

" 'Why?' asked the same voice again; but an old man near by, who was really interested, gave him a push, and he fell off his stone on to the ground.

" 'So that now,' said Ban-Ker, 'if you only want a few rushes for torches you need not kill your sheep and exchange half a leg for them, but you can pay with this

little piece. I will also give you each twenty of these little ones too.'

"Then everyone began to talk and think Ban-Ker was very clever indeed, and they looked at the pieces of silver and there was a pretty pattern on each, but on the big piece was written Wun, and on the little piece Not-Wun, and although they could not read they could see that the two pieces were different.

"Finally they agreed to accept Ban-Ker's idea, and they all received twenty Not-Wuns and ten Wuns. The people were very pleased with these pieces, and began to buy and sell goods with great enthusiasm, till some had no pieces left and others had a great many.

"Then the people with no Sil-Ver began to try to exchange their sheep and goats for iron and fashioned stone, but the people with Sil-Ver would not have it like that—they wanted Wuns, which were much more useful.

"Then the people with no Wuns went to Ban-Ker, and told him, and Ban-Ker, who had expected this, said:

" 'I'll tell you what I'll do. Of course, you have been very careless and all that, but if you like I'll lend you some Wuns to go on with, but at the end of each moon you must give me one Not-Wun for every Wun you borrow until you can give me back all the Wuns I lent you. You see, if I am going to help you I must be paid for help like anyone else.'

"They agreed to this, and all went well. Then those that had many Wuns began to lend Wuns to others, and ask a Not-Wun as interest. Now Ban-Ker immediately saw this would not suit him at all, so he told the rich people that if they had Sil-Ver that they did not need, he would look after it for them and give them a Not-Wun every two moons

for every Wun they left with him for ever and ever. Now some people thought this a good idea, but others, who had been lending Wuns, did not. It was therefore put to the vote of the whole of the two communities, and as there were only a few who lent out Wuns, they were beaten, and Ban-Ker alone had control. Now as time went on, Ban-Ker became richer and richer; for every Wun he lent out he received a Not-Wun every moon, and for every Wun he received he only paid out one Not-Wun every two moons, and as the people progressed so did he; and funnily enough, when a drought or a pestilence came, he prospered just the same, or even more, because everyone wanted more Wuns to repair the damage.

“ ‘ I thought I could get the two and two to equal five,’ mused the devil; but even while he was thinking Ban-Ker had made two and two equal six, for he had invented compound interest in addition.”

And that is the end of the story, by which, among other things, you learn that Sil-Ver, when used as money, is merely a medium of exchange.

Now as years went by money was silver and gold and bronze or copper, and kings and governments controlled their issue. Owing, however, to wars, kings found that they could not get enough of these metals, and so they looked round to discover where they could obtain more. It was then that Jews and cunning people began to lend these metals to kings, and charge interest for so doing, and gradually these lenders became very rich and gathered much power to themselves. During the Napoleonic wars so much money was needed that paper had to be issued instead of metal, each piece of paper guaranteeing to pay the bearer in a precious metal. This led to prosperity at home, and con-

sequently, owing to the amount of money in circulation, lenders (who were now called bankers) could not get a sufficient demand for the money they were holding as a commodity. Therefore, being still very rich and powerful, they forced the English Government in 1820 to call in this paper money and go back to metal, which was done.

Immediately began a state of trade depression, which lasted till 1848, and was known as the "Hungry Forties." In 1844, the British Government introduced what was known as the gold standard, and their lead, much later on, was followed by other countries. This gold standard meant that paper and other metals could only be used as money if an equivalent amount of gold was behind them. It also meant that he who controlled gold controlled prosperity, and it likewise meant that shortage or expansion of gold meant little purchasing power or much purchasing power. Its one advantage was that if other countries adopted it there could be one standard of exchange by which nations could deal with each other. However, this did not work very well, because there was not enough gold to go round, and banks were therefore soon allowed to issue more paper and silver money than was balanced by the gold in their store-rooms. This excess of money over gold is still called the "fiduciary issue."

From 1848 to 1873 there was a period of great prosperity, owing to the discovery of alluvial gold in California and Australia, and the world's production increased from £5,000,000 to about £30,000,000 annually. Wages in England doubled.

From 1873 to 1895 a trade depression in England was due to the U.S.A. and other European countries adopting the gold standard, and thereby buying much of the gold

we were using to back our own money issue. There was also a drop in the world's gold production of about £20,000,000. Great unemployment resulted from this. In 1895 trade boomed again owing to the discovery of gold in South Africa and Alaska, and quartz gold in Australia. The annual production of gold increased to £95,000,000 from 1895 to 1914.

Then came the World War, and so much money was needed that the Bank of England closed its doors for the fourth time in its existence; the State came to its aid, took over the issue of money, abolished the gold standard, and told the Bank not to worry any more, making the governor of the Bank a peer. The money the State issued was used to finance the production of war materials, but as the production of these materials was financed largely by the State and bought as finished products by the State, and used by the State without *keeping a corresponding check* on the amount of money in circulation, we found ourselves at the end of the war with high prices (caused by too much money for buying and too few ordinary goods to be bought) and little useful production. We ought, of course, to have kept our currency relative to our production of usable goods, and, you see, shells and things were merely blown up and were not usable in the proper sense. Therefore an equivalent amount of paper money should have been torn up, but this was not done. In 1917 a commission urged the Government to go back to the gold standard as quickly as possible after the war, and hand over the money control to the banks. As this commission was entirely controlled by bankers, except for one man, the decision was not surprising. Whereupon the Government began to call in the treasury notes, and millions of them were burnt. This was in

1921, but as too many notes were burnt, there was not enough currency to circulate goods; therefore unemployment set in and began to increase. In 1925 the gold standard was officially re-introduced, and from that day to this, with certain fluctuations, unemployment has gone up and up, firms have closed down, loans have been called in, thousands of people have been made bankrupt, and the banks have made bigger profits since 1921 than ever before in their lives. Prices have, of course, fallen, since there are many goods to be bought, but not enough money in people's pockets to buy them.

As soon as the gold standard was re-introduced, the banks began their old game of using money as a commodity and offering it round Europe and South America at good interest, but they made one stupid mistake. All the money went to encourage production instead of consumption, because there are always a certain amount of goods for sale in a deflation period, and what is wanted is money for consumption—high wages and so on. They have been doing this for ten years now, and that was the reason for the so-called "crisis" of 1931. For, owing to tariff walls, the borrowing countries have not been able to sell what these bankers' loans enabled them to produce; and owing to the gold standard in their own countries and consequent currency restriction, their own people cannot consume at home. Therefore the debtors cannot pay their interest, and the English banks cannot get their money back to use as credit and currency for the needs of our own country. Consequently the banks began to urge a general cutting down of standards of living to keep what little credit and currency they have left in harmony with English needs, which must, therefore, be restricted in proportion. Now let us foresee

a little of what will happen as a result of this economy campaign.

We have noticed how periods of unemployment and misery result from a shortage of currency, and we have been interested to observe how, under the gold standard, with every new discovery of gold there has been prosperity. We see, therefore, how dependent we are on gold, and we know that the only reason we keep to this gold fetish is that we may be the money market of the world, although our industries may perish and the people be out of work. Economy is proposed—wages are to be cut. This will mean more unemployment, and a gradual increase thereafter, until we cease to need any of the new inventions we have become used to. We shall go back and back: there will be no need to produce, for no one can buy but the rich. We may still be the usurers of the world, but we shall also be the work-house of the world.

Money, without which we cannot exchange goods, as I have tried to show, is entirely in the hands of the Bank of England, which is a private institution and is primarily and naturally run for the benefit of its private shareholders. In France, the National Bank's governor and two sub-governors are appointed by the State. In England, the State has no control, and no questions may be asked in Parliament about its policy. The English nation has gratuitously handed to the Bank of England the monopoly of credit and currency issue, and when the State needs any money it says: "Will you please let us have some of our own money?" and the Bank replies: "Yes, at so much per cent." Every penny borrowed by the State goes forth with the mill-stone of interest round its neck, whereas if the Bank were nationally controlled such a thing could not happen. The burden of



interest becomes heavier and heavier; the only money available in large quantities is only for production. The demand for this even is falling off now, for there are no purchasers. They permit an excess of money to be hoarded, and then, to enable trade to continue, they bribe the hoarders by giving interest to loan it back to them for circulation. Investment, to-day, is simply transferring potential consumption power to impotent financing of unconsumable production. I hope this circle is not too involved, but if you see where the initial mistake lies, the subject cannot be clouded, and in order that it may sink well in, I will clarify it once more. The purpose of money is to exchange goods: if you bind yourself to a fixed standard such as gold, however much you may want to increase production and prosperity you must keep level with the extent of gold production.

Since the end of the war, production has increased three-fold, but gold has remained merely static. Money is bought and sold, and interest and principal is the price paid. Interest therefore increases out of all proportion, and can never be paid off as long as there is only a fixed amount of money and the interest is extra to the actual day to day supply. Just an instance of how the Commonwealth Bank of Australia started:

It started as a Savings Bank in 1912 with a capital of £10,000 from the State. In 1914 the Australian Government allowed it to become a Joint Stock Bank—to extend its functions to lending and gambling—and as a result it was able to finance Australia's share of the war from 1916 onwards. On the strength of Australia's credit (not on its own) its financial backing of the war was £150,000,000. In 1913 and 1914 the Savings Bank showed a total loss of some £70,000, but after its new powers were obtained it made

increased profits every year, till in 1920 it made over £3,000,000 and its total assets were £135,000,000. 1920, let me add, was the first year of Australia's deflation of her currency. The other day Australia asked this bank for a loan, but the terms were so stiff that they could not be accepted. What a Frankenstein monster: what ingratitude for the original £10,000 of less than twenty years ago!

It is surely a strange thing that the more prosperous the country, the less prosperous the banks, and the less prosperous the country, the higher the bank profits: but then banks live on, and prosper on, lending money, and when trade is prosperous and money is changing hands rapidly, there is not so much need for credit.

There is another funny joke about this banking which has not received much notice up till now. It concerns the bank-rate—the rate at which (or rather just over which) you can obtain a loan. Now, if we in Britain export more goods than we receive from abroad per annum, the bank-rate will go down, for firms are prosperous, and the rates for interest go down because loans are not needed. Therefore when our trade balance is advantageous, money is cheap.

If, on the other hand, we import more than we send out, then (perhaps because our production has fallen) the bank-rate rises and producers who wish to restore the balance of trade are immediately handicapped by dear money.

The main reason, however, for the rise and fall of the bank-rate in those circumstances is this: If we export more than we receive, our balance comes to us in gold, the goods we send being set off by the goods we receive. When there is much gold the bank-rate is low—gold being a commodity and therefore, if plentiful, “is cheap to-day,” as it were.

If we import more than we send out, the balance is sent from us abroad in gold, and gold leaves the country, therefore raising the bank-rate to check too great an outflow.

You see, therefore, how you cut off your nose to spite your face, and probably you are wondering at the stupidity of the scheme. But I tell you the reason for the mess is because we are trying to make two and two into five, and it simply cannot be done.

Life is birth, growth and decay, and economic life is production, distribution and exchange. That is a logical sequence. To-day we believe economically only in production (that is birth) we cannot distribute (which is growth) because there is no consumption (and that is decay). When Nature cannot fulfil its destiny terrible things happen. When mathematics cannot be mathematical, the results are more tragic because it is our own fault, since we can alter false mathematics, but we are generally prevented from fiddling about too much with Nature.

The greatest ally of this present position is the colossal ignorance of people on the subject, and the amazing reverence they have for words. "Slumps" and "booms," "economic blizzard," "gold standard," "production, distribution and exchange," all lead people to accept the first two words as inevitable, the third as a safe phrase to conceal ignorance, the fourth as a fetish, and the last as a general indication that knowledge of the phrase shows knowledge of the whole subject. The two most fatuous phrases are "the inviolable laws of Economics" and the "intricacies of High Finance." Well, if basing a medium of exchange on a metal basis irrespective of actual or potential production is an "inviolable law of Economics," and a simple ball of monetary wool after a banker's kitten has played with it

for half an hour is one of the "intricacies of High Finance," the phrase-mongers are right.

Because finance has shown itself working in inverse ratio as regards prosperity to industry, and because it has got itself internationally into a pretty mess, and because the Bank of France has several times had to come to the rescue of the Bank of England, why must we go on believing that only the bankers know what's what? Did they not tell us we could never carry the 1914-18 war on for longer than a few months? Did they not tell us that a return to the gold standard would put the country soundly on its feet? Is it not a fact that the bankers never saw the inevitability of that which was apparent to anyone who had studied the question since the war?

There is one other joke which must be mentioned in connection with "money madness," and that is thrift.

Now let us clearly acknowledge that the real reason why people save is because, if they did not, they would have nothing to keep them in their old age and would end in the workhouse. Right. Now let us see what thrift actually does. In times of prosperity thrift has not a bad effect, since money is invested and keeps industry developing. But to-day, when the wheels of industry are scarcely moving, when investment in industry brings no return in many, many cases because there is no demand for goods, what then does thrift do? It simply stops the circulation of money, holds up purchasing power, depresses trade and thereby causes unemployment. Oh, yes, it does. Say you have a pound in hand and are wondering whether to buy a pair of boots or invest it. Say you invest it in an industrial firm. Your pound is not going to prevent the fact that the firm may close down for lack of orders. But supposing

with your pound you give that firm an order—say it's a boot firm and you buy a pair of boots from a shop window. Don't you see how much more important consumption is than you thought?

For years people have preached thrift. Firms are over-capitalized and have passed their dividends as a result. Money is thrown away again and again into production—there is not enough for consumption, and still thrift is preached under the shadow of the workhouse. The fact of our being “off the gold standard” at the moment has the effect of lowering the value of our pound in terms of a gold-standard country, which is, of course, advantageous for selling purposes; but as the Bank of England is still restricting the supply of money to within a normal fiduciary issue limit, there is no great difference in the effect on unemployment. Our own idea of national employment financed by new money, accompanied by investment control and nationalization of the banks, is, of course, a terrible thought for those in authority. I hope this is all clear to you. Pull it to pieces if you can and we will discuss it, but I do want you to have the unorthodox view before your eyes. The results of the orthodox one are only too apparent. Here is the thing put simply.

In normal times and before these results are all attained, we have this position:

#### GOODS

Unlimited.

#### MEDIUM OF EXCHANGE

Bound by the amount of gold held.

1st RESULT: Either production must be curtailed should it become too great for the amount of money in circulation, or the amount of money (credit, paper, metal) must expand with production.

BUT, under the present inane system, production must keep within the limits of the gold supply and an artificially decided fiduciary issue.

1ST PECULIARITY: This limited amount of the medium of exchange can be exported, hoarded, invested or spent.

THEREFORE: The more exported the less is left to circulate commodities. The more that is hoarded the less there is in circulation. The more that is invested the less there is for consumption. The more that is spent the more is consumed, the more is created, the more people are employed.

THE BIG JOKE: Money (the medium of exchange), of which there is only a limited amount owing to the arbitrary bounds set around it by adherence to the gold fetish, in times of deflation is exported to other countries in the search for interest, and gambled with on Stock Exchanges, passing from hand to hand in the purchase of stocks and shares and consuming nothing, ceasing therefore to fulfil its primary object, which is the circulation of commodities.

SECOND BIG JOKE: Any attack on this fatuous way of doing things is called 'Bolshevism run mad,' 'Unsound finance,' 'Inflation' or merely 'Dangerous.'

THIRD BIG JOKE: Not one person in a million bothers to understand the subject.

## CHAPTER NINE

War and what happened—Nationalism again—Ideals of war—Evil of war—Conscientious objectors—The lost generation.

IN talking to you on war and peace I want to warn you again about that state of blind hysteria that is wrongly called patriotism or love of country. It has nothing whatsoever to do with the country, its laws and fields, its people and its towns. It is agreement with and enthusiasm for the acts of the particular government you prefer. When we talk of a man who likes any country but his own, we generally mean the man who prefers other countries' forms of government to his own. To make this clear you have only to accuse those Conservatives who, in Ulster, armed themselves with rifles imported from Germany and were prepared to defy the British Government of 1914, of being unpatriotic. They will assert they were against the Liberal Government of the day and not against the country, and they will be quite right. Yet these same people are the first to call those unpatriotic who refuse, for instance, to coerce people back to work by breaking a general strike. Whereas, of course, these latter are also against the Government but not against the country's interests, inasmuch as they believe, let us say, that a prolongation of a strike would be the best for their country in the long run.

The same argument is true with reference to those who fight in wars or refuse to fight. Both believe that what

they do is in the best interests of their country. We had better leave it, then, that "patriotism," as we know it to-day, is support of Conservative principles, and any contrary principles are "unpatriotic." We will give our opponents the word for their own use, as they seem incapable of logical thought on the subject. I am telling you this because once a war is declared this patriotism business runs amok. There is no arguing with it. Religion goes by the board, but churches prosper; uniforms are the order of the day, and the strains of martial music fill the air. And there is a lot in martial music. It is the drum that causes the trouble: the old savage instrument that quickens the pulse and makes people forget their sanity. The throb of the drum has driven men to slaughter throughout the ages. It is an evil instrument indeed. When this shouting and throbbing gets into the blood, then the queues of young men form at the recruiting stations, and those who are too old to go urge on their sons and brothers. The mothers, vying with other mothers, worry because they have not more sons to go, and then the two parents, their sons gone from them, glow with pride that at last their children are proving worthy of them. It is a horrible business, but no one stops to think at the time; and it is only when the telegram comes to say their son is no more that the first doubt creeps into the mind that has been closed to reason and thought since the first beat of the war drum sounded through the land. And wives send husbands, fearful lest their neighbours should despise the stay-at-homes; and children are taught to salute daddy when he comes home to show that they are doing their bit by absorbing the atmosphere. And in the enemy country it is the same: thousands of the young and strong going forth to kill each other because the old men have told them to



go, and thereby let loose upon the minds of all the devil's own agents fear and false patriotism.

My son, I write bitterly in this chapter. I crave your forgiveness. I will not hinder you if you feel you must go when the time comes, but I hate war more than I hate anything in this world, and I am convinced it is evil—more convinced on this subject than on any other. Your mother felt the same as I, for she too had seen and suffered in the last one. She knew, as I knew, how responsible her sex was for what happened. She knew, as I know, how easily women could stop its recurrence. Yes, son, women more than men; for the cry of war goes out to the accompaniment of many slogans, and “to protect your womenfolk” is the strongest of them. All down the ages woman has urged her man to battle. She tied her silken scarf round his helmet in the Middle Ages as she placed his “balaclava” helmet in his haversack in 1914. She praised his fine, up-standing self in his uniform, and asked him to bring her back a medal. Oh, why did she not keep quiet? Why did she not laugh at him in his uniform and say: “How silly you look dressed up like that. What do you want to go and kill people for?” There would be breathing time then—time for thought—if every wife asked that question of her man. And the young and unmarried women walk up and down the streets and give any young man not in uniform white feathers, to show him that woman looks on him as a coward. I always think this last touch the very height of cowardice, for the woman had the easier task in this case. I have shown you, I think, the white feather that was given me when I was sixteen, and I kept it because I was so proud that the woman had thought I looked old enough to be a soldier. Of course, son, many of those people

do think it a fine thing to go out and kill others, and I have no quarrel with them. I disagree entirely, yet I respect this conviction if it be truly felt; but the vast majority have no convictions. The flag has veiled their eyes, the drum has deafened their ears, and the Church has assuaged their consciences.

There would soon be an end to war if the military age was forty to eighty and included both sexes. Cannot you imagine the difficulty Great-Uncle Bertie (if you had one) would have in getting out of his trench at zero hour, or the refusal of Great-Aunt Alice to go on sentry-go until her hot-water bottle (full of shrapnel holes) were mended? And the arguments, and the knitting, and the unsteady aim, and the courtesy of some old gentleman who refrains from running some old lady through with his bayonet. And the fraternization, to use a small word . . . No, war would not last long under those circumstances. It would be just as stupid this way, but not nearly so tragic; for the old, if killed, would have had their youth, and your father and thousands of others never had one, son; and I do so want you to have one.

Yet, thank God, there is a humorous side to war, and perhaps during those trying times we laugh more easily and enjoy things more. So many had such a short time to go, and the dread of the future is too far away. I remember hearing a story of Scarborough after the Germans had shelled the town which shows how people can still laugh in war-time. A Mrs. Smith, after the bombardment, had reason to fear for the safety of a Mrs. Robinson whose house was very near the shelled area, so Mrs. Smith sent her Yorkshire maid to inquire after her. The maid returned and said Mrs. Robinson had told her to say she was well, but very, very happy.

"Why so happy?" asked Mrs. Smith.

"She says as there's bound to be a 'second coming' after this, but I says: 'You was frit enough when the Germans come, without wanting no "second coming."' So she says: 'It ain't the same thing,' and I says: 'Wot's difference?'"

Entirely by the way; but it was typical of the attitude in those days. It would be a good thing for peace if more people realized that some of the sons they mourn to-day were not killed by the enemy, but shot by their own people at the order of courts martial because their nervous system broke under the strain. That so often have some of the war graves been moved, that it is not necessarily the complete skeleton that rests under the named gravestone. That the enemy did not crucify babies, or burn their own soldiers' bodies to extract fat. That the German medal commemorating the sinking of the *Lusitania* was re-struck in Birmingham for propaganda purposes. That although we did not fight to gain territory, we did add 1,415,929 square miles to our Empire. That the business of a propaganda department is to keep the war going with the aid of any lies that can be invented. In the last month of the war, for instance, company commanders on my own divisional front had to read to their men one of these *communiqués*, which related how a Frenchwoman from the village of St. Python had had her breasts cut off for offering a cup of water to one of our wounded. Later on we discovered that even if this woman had done so she would have had to pass through the German front line, cross over the River Selle (which had no bridge), and walk across no-man's-land to our front posts: which was clearly impossible. It was done to raise our hatred and make us

burn for revenge. By that time, however, it needed more than that to make us enthusiastic. Faked photographs were used with great success, both in the daily press and for distribution among the German troops from the air. The enemy also relied largely on false propaganda, and from 1916 to the end carried out lectures in every division for the purpose of strengthening the morale of the troops with lies and jingoism. One of the more amusing instances of enemy propaganda was meant to show Germany how vicious we had become. It was an attempt by Germany at a translation from the agony column of an English newspaper. The translation was: "Jack, F. G.—If you are not in khaki by the 20th, *hacke ich dich zu Tode*," for the original "I will cut you dead." You see how simple it is.

The same sort of lies are used to-day to encourage Nationalism. The issue is rampant at the moment and is a peculiar thing, being most admirable to knit a people together in times of oppression, and most evil for a nation in times of prosperity or independence. In times of oppression the nation is united by an appeal that reminds them of the art, beauty and culture which their forbears made famous throughout the world. In times of prosperity the appeal is to might and wealth. One good thing to be said of war is that it kills middle-class morality. Other results of war are more interesting; a few in its favour, but most against it. I will enumerate the pros and cons in that order.

The high ideals that call forth the best in the fighting man are, strangely enough, Socialist ones—that will surprise most people. They are the concentrated service of the individual for the service of the State. The complete absence of materialistic gain for the individual. The

security offered by pensions to wives, next-of-kin and the maimed. The chance for youth to vie with age on a more equal footing, and the comradeship of all in the pursuit of the common aim. If you ask any fighting soldier what he liked best in the war, he will tell you one or all of these things, and yet be incapable of realizing how entirely socialistic those qualities are.

Now against that we have lies, hatred of the enemy, persecution of the pacifist, deceit, murder, sorrow and despair for the dead, soldiers maimed in mind and body, adoration of force, blind obedience, and vast material wealth to be made by civilians out of the blood of their fellow men. It is the atmosphere of war that drugs one into a fool's paradise, that distorts values and makes you assert how fine it is to die when it is so much more difficult and useful to live.

And what, you may ask, are the causes of war? To sum up in one word, I say private property. St. Augustine warned us of it centuries ago: "Private property is based on no natural right and only exists because of laws established by man; it is that which engenders law-suits, quarrels, duels, revolutions, scandals and murders. . . ." It is the desire for gain, for possession, that causes war—that and that alone. You see now, perhaps, why I am always attacking possessions. It is the root cause. You may say here: "Ah, he wants to cut the tree before the branches in this case." Yes, son, I do, because there are no branches to cut.

Peace is essential for the progress of the world. War kills the chance for spiritual progress. It is our divine duty to preserve peace; and I go farther than most, I say, yes—at any price. I am certain that the only way to stop

war is to refuse to fight, and I would like you to read Tolstoy's "Ivan the Fool" to see why. Then, you say, you will be invaded. Yes. "And after that?" you ask. Then one of two things happen, either our invaders remain and rule us, which is very unlikely for economic reasons, or they fine us a large sum of money and go home. If we fight, thousands are killed, anyhow; if we win we are saddled with a colossal debt, and if we do not win we get fined and are unable to pay. This is an unpopular creed, chiefly because we live too much for the present and have forgotten how, out of invasion and occupation, we have become the people we are. When I was a soldier I would gladly have shot any conscientious objector I met in France. I had never heard their point of view, did not think they ought to have one at all; nor did I imagine there was anything wrong in war, although for four years at school I went to church every day and twice on Sundays.

Since the war I have met several C.O.'s, and they certainly took the most difficult road. The question that worried so many at that time was whether it was right to take food that had been brought over at the risk of men's lives. Some who were selfish, said yes. Some, who had small plots of land, lived on them. Some voluntarily starved themselves and died. Some took up national work on the land or joined ambulance corps, or even made munitions. I think the latter were wrong. Some who took up ambulance work were even disturbed at the fact that their care of a wounded man would enable him to return and rejoin the killing. The most logical way out, therefore, is to till the soil to provide food for the civilian population, and even that is not logically foolproof. I have been in three wars, as you know, and no good has

come out of any one of them. The high ideals, which, as I explained, were Socialist ones, have disappeared. The world has gone back to the class struggle, to cut-throat competition, to the economic struggle for existence which is the breeder of evil passions and lust for possession.

My generation, whose youth was swallowed in the war, is a lost generation. It reached emotions before it understood them, it saw pain and suffering and horror as part of its daily round; its nervous system was shattered, and it was tired and worn out before it attained the thirties. It felt most strongly that nothing it could ever experience in the future would be new to it, no joy or sorrow could ever again be felt so acutely, no friendships could ever be so marvellous as those formed under the shadow of the guns—friendships which only one of the two is left to remember. We that went through it are cynics or sentimentalists, violent in our feelings or entirely apathetic. We know no middle course in recalling our memories to life. We are outcasts, unwanted, unheeded and lost.

There are only two things that vitally concern the masses of our country at the moment, and those are the terror of unemployment and the question of war and peace. It is because of the importance of the latter that I have tried to tell you something about it.

## CHAPTER TEN

Church versus Christianity—Plenty of this—Of prayer.

I WANT you to understand clearly that in this chapter, when I speak of Christianity, I mean the doctrine of Christ as recorded in the four gospels and part of the Acts of the Apostles. When I speak of Churchianity I refer to the interpretation of this doctrine as conceived and executed by organized Churches. If I did not draw that clear distinction you might imagine Christianity to be identical with the actions of the Churches. That would be a foolish mistake. The life of Jesus Christ, as much as we know of it, can be read in the four gospels, as also his teaching, though you must remember those are only transcripts from manuscripts that have never been seen by living man.

We find in these gospels that although Joseph was Christ's father and Mary his mother, he is supposed to have been born of an "immaculate conception." That, of course, is the oriental way of doing honour to great prophets, and was said of Sakya Muni years and years before Christ's birth. The name Maria was also the name of Sakya Muni's mother, and the period of forty days and forty nights passed in the wilderness by Christ and his temptation by the devil are also to be found in Sakya Muni's life. Those things are of no consequence: nor is the adoration of Mary by certain sects to the exclusion of Joseph. That,



of course, is only because the Church was made by man. Had women made it Joseph would probably have been the more important of the two. The important point is that Christ led a certain kind of life, and originated certain doctrines that have appealed to millions of people ever since. Christ preached peace and love to all men, humility, gentleness, and communion with God. The Church that grew up after his death has been making a living ever since by reading his Word on Sundays, and taking great care to insist that "the Word" only shows the way, and need not necessarily be followed immediately. In order to increase its power at the expense of the pure doctrine, the Church, down through the ages, has added bits of dogma, altered and expunged, starting with the assertion that Christ and God were one and the same, which they decided at the Council of Nicea, three hundred and twenty-five years after Christ's death. This Council was summoned by the infamous Emperor Constantine, and the divinity clause was agreed to after the majority of clergy, who were called Arians, had been forbidden to attend.

Now you and I, when we see a good play, or read a good book, and feel in our heart of hearts that what is expressed therein is spiritually uplifting, do not care if the author were born of a virgin or not. If we are told the author is God, we are rather disappointed, because we expected something better. But if we are told he was a poor carpenter's son, who was not very considerate to his parents, and was crucified alive for his opinions, then it becomes interesting. Christ and his disciples renounced riches and lived as communists. We read that in the Acts of the Apostles, and we read a very pretty tale of what happened to Ananias and Sapphira at the same time. But the

Church denounces the dividing up of material riches. Christ preached "turning the other cheek to the enemy." But the Church encouraged the last war from one end of England to the other.

Christ advocates prayer to your God in the privacy of your chamber. The Church builds cathedrals and organizes processions and ceremonies instead. Christ urged those who preach his words to go forth humbly without riches or even food; their wants, he said, would be supplied. The Church pays high salaries to its princes, and adorns its services with all the pomp and wealth of display. Christ told the Jews that the synagogue was a house of prayer. Many of our churches here are hung with regimental banners, symbols of warfare and bloodshed. Those are some of the reasons for the decay of the Churches. There are many others.

Why has the Church done this? say you. The answer is not difficult to seek, but it goes back to the time of Constantine. When the rich took up the religion of the poor they made their own friends bishops and popes, and the damage was soon done. The purest form of the original Church is found to-day only among the poor religious orders of monks and nuns.

I feel a little bitter about the Church when I think of the parsons, with their military ranks during the war, who were so keen that we should kill more Germans than the Germans killed of us. And it is a ghastly thought that except for a few individuals, neither the Roman, Anglican nor Nonconformist Churches made a single organized protest against war as such in 1914. They have been let off too lightly with their inconsistencies, and I want you to remember how they denied their Master's fundamental teaching in

those difficult days. They were taught to watch and pray, lest their great day of trial should catch them unawares. The trial came and found them blessing troops, dedicating drums, and hanging battle standards in their churches. Listen to the fathers of the Church and see how different are the sons.

St. Cyprian: "Thou shalt hold all in common with thy neighbour, and thou shalt not call thy goods thine own private property; for if you enjoy in common imperishable goods, how much more should it be with those that are perishable."

Clement of Rome: "Communal life is a necessity for all who would serve God in irreproachable fashion, and wish to walk in the footsteps of the apostles and their disciples. It is unjust for each to speak of what is his, and it is from that that comes division among men."

Ambrose of Milan: "Men can only attain their true end by having all things in common. Private property is an obstacle in the way of confidence and love."

St. Jerome: "All riches are unjust, and if the rich man is not unjust himself, personally, he is the inheritor of iniquity."

Gregory the Great: "When we give alms to the poor, we accomplish an act of justice rather than compassion, because what God has given us is only equitably employed when we hold all things in common."

Now go to St. Paul's Cathedral and listen to the difference. . . . Here is a very lovely prayer which used to be in the Church of England prayer-book, but it did not stay there long. "We heartily pray Thee to send Thy Holy Spirit into the hearts of them that possess the grounds and pastures of the earth, that they, remembering themselves to

be Thy tenants, may not rack or stretch out the rents of their houses or lands, nor yet take unreasonable fines or monies, after the manner of covetous worldlings, but so to let them out that the inhabitants thereof may be able to pay the rents, and to live and assist their families and remember the poor. Give them grace also to consider that they are but strangers and pilgrims in this world, having here no dwelling-place, but seeking one to come; that they, remembering the short continuance of this life, may be content with that which is sufficient, and not to join house to house or land to land to the impoverishment of others, but so to behave themselves in letting their tenements, lands and pastures, that after this life they may be received into everlasting habitations."

Among the creeds announced from church pulpits are hell-fire for the wicked, which is of the Old Testament, and the Holy Communion, which is the echo of a pagan feast. The doctrine of the Trinity is merely oriental symbolism, to be found in non-Christian lands, also the doctrine of Original Sin—the explanation of the object of existence which seemed to the ancients easiest to understand. What the early Christians really wanted was Redemption from slavery and Forgiveness of debt. The organized Church made their desires more "constitutional." There is much truth in the following:

Ding dong bell,  
The Church is in the well.  
Who put it in?  
Original Sin.  
Who'll pull it out?  
Original doubt.

And I shall not tell you where that comes from. Of other

religions the best known are Mohammedanism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Hebrew, Zoroaster's teaching and Lao-Tsëism. All seven preach that there is one God, the ruler and maker of the universe. The teaching of Mohammed, Buddha, Confucius, Zoroaster and Lao-Tsë are not unsimilar to the teaching of Christ. You know the main tenets of all these, and you once said you preferred Buddha's. His was certainly a glorious spirit.

The reason people feel the need of religion is that it is extremely difficult to hold ideals in the face of a materialist world. The help that comes from the slightest contact with things not of this earth is enormous. People who go to church, unless it be from habit, go to make contact between something inside them which they cannot express and something outside them which they cannot understand. They are reaching for help, for something to fill the empty spaces in their lives; and if the Church can give that to them, then that Church is doing a great service. It is because the Church veils God from my eyes that I cannot subscribe to its support. That is my personal opinion, but I do not interfere with others who feel differently, for religious intolerance is an abomination. I will argue on religion from knowledge of facts and the interpretation of teaching, but I will not say that Churches are not good for Aunt Z or Uncle Y. They probably are extremely helpful to such people, even if they do have religious mania, which is generally an inverted sex complex to be found in ungratified elderly spinsters. Churches, like houses, have atmospheres, and in buildings where genuine concentrated prayer to the Infinite has been offered, great peace and inward happiness are to be found. For there is power in prayer. I am convinced of that. There is help in prayer. I have experienced that.

There is comfort in prayer. That I may swear before the world. I do not like Churchianity, but I am extremely religious. I told you years ago how that came to me, and as years go by I feel even grateful for those terrible days of long ago. Probably the beginning of my distaste was too much church-going in schooldays; but the main reason is that I cannot find Church teaching compatible with Christ's teaching, and I prefer the latter. If it be true that one cannot serve both God and Mammon, as I believe, it is therefore true that one cannot serve God and the Church, for a more material organization than the Church it is difficult to find, with its lands and palaces, gold and silver plate, titles and salaries. I am old-fashioned enough to believe that Christ can best be preached by poor celibates, and without pomp—that is why I find myself in sympathy with the lower rungs of the Roman Church on the one hand, and teachers of Nonconformity on the other.

I want you to know your Bible. The language is glorious and the interest most varied. You will read things in Micah, Isaiah and Habbakuk which would cause them to be locked up in this country if repeated in Hyde Park; nevertheless, you need not pay attention to them if they interfere with your politics. I do not mean that. I was quoting from a story I remember a clergyman who once preached on the evil of war, and was reproved by an elderly lady of the congregation, who said that he had no business to bring his politics into religion. He replied: "I preach what Christ preached, very ineffectively, I know, and if what he said interferes with your politics, you had better change them, or keep away from church." It seems to me incredible that one's politics should not be the same as one's religion. Is religion only for one's dealings with oneself,

and politics only for one's dealings with other people? I am afraid it is so with many worthy church-goers. Have you ever noticed how, in the Church of England prayer-book, the Lord's prayer has been altered? In the Gospels it reads: "Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors." In the prayer-book we read: "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those that trespass against us." It is an easy way to get out of a difficulty and evade the responsibility of one's accepted religion.

In moments of unhappiness religious people turn with increased fervour to their religious faith, and no one more than I. I am always slightly ashamed of this, though. It is like our attitude towards old friends. We go to them for sympathy after having paid no attention to them for years. I wonder if you ever pray? You probably do not at your age. If you do start, there is one little thing I suggest to you. Do not pray for material benefits. That is all. It seems to me such a contradiction of the teaching.

You will find in life many agnostics and a few atheists. Your great-grandfather was an atheist until the last few years of his life, when, one night, he had such a vivid nightmare that he swore to his dying day that he had seen the devil. In this he prided himself on being one with Luther. Atheists deny the existence of a God: agnostics merely say they do not know whether there is one or not. Nor do we, if it comes to that; but we feel there must be an object for the scheme of things, and that there must be a traffic manager somewhere. We endow our traffic manager with qualities of goodness and mercy, maybe because we should be in a nasty hole if he were unpleasant and vindictive. Some people say he is. That is not my experience, for when things seem to go all wrong I generally find it is for

some good purpose. The training of the spirit by fasting and prayer does certainly give a truly wonderful inward peace, but unless one is a monk and goes into retreat, it is difficult to carry out. It may be that at some critical period of your life you may experience what is known as spiritual ecstasy. If you do, you will never forget it, for you feel as if your head is touching the floor of heaven and your body weighs but two pounds. The peace that steals over you is like nothing else in the world; you sigh your fullest and deepest. Your face becomes seraphic and—well, you just cannot be an atheist, and that is what you feel about it.

Be considerate of other people's beliefs, but do not imagine that because a man has passed an examination in Greek and Latin, and had a bishop's hands placed on his head, he is the only one qualified to show you the way to God. It is a poor soul that does not know it automatically.



## CHAPTER ELEVEN

Only of your mother.

I AM going to talk to you about your mother because it is good for you to know how many of her qualities you possess yourself. Your memory of her must necessarily be vague, and you can only rely on that photograph of her that you carry, taken sitting outside the Café Glacier in Biskra.

Your mother was twenty-one when I met her, looking out of the pages of one of those amazing illustrated "Society" journals that Uncle Peter used to run. She was going to be presented at Court, the paper said, and was a "beautiful débutante"; her father was a Major-General. You could not have had anything much worse than that to start with; but then there was something different in her expression. Something in that face said: "Isn't this all rather stupid?" And I was even conceited enough to think she said to me: "Please take me away from all this."

I closed that paper, not expecting to think about her any more, for I did not move in her circles, and we were never likely to meet. Try as I might, however, I could not get her face out of my mind. I assured myself that she must be just like the others, a vapid, rouged, fox-chasing, horse-racing, cocktail-drinking young woman for whom five minutes in the dark alone with a young man assured an immediate invitation to the bedroom; but it came to pass--

and this is a romance—that I did a thing I do only about once a year. I went to a cocktail-party at Uncle Jerry's, and as I was leaning against the mantelpiece, wondering how soon I could get away, the woman of my thoughts walked in. She was not introduced to me, but after about five minutes I noticed her looking at the book-shelves just to the right of where I was standing. "Aha," I thought, "she is interested in literature."

"Have you read any of Jerry's poems?" I asked quite casually.

"No," she replied, and then she looked at me, full in the face.

Son, she had violet eyes, not just blue—violet, and black eyelashes and black hair. Now do you see where you get it from? I looked at her straight in the eyes and she suddenly said:

"What's your name?"

Your mother always asserted that the question was: "Where have we met before?" But it wasn't, although she might have thought so. I told her my name. She then said:

"Why are you a Socialist?"

And as I can never quite understand why anyone is not, I said quite brazenly:

"If you will lunch with me one day I will tell you."

And she did, son; and she behaved very well and very quietly, and not for a year did I see her again. Then it befell—oh, it is still a romance—that I almost collided with her coming out of my bookseller's, with a copy of my new book under her arm.

"You'll write to me and tell me what you think of it, won't you?" I asked.

And she did. And it was the most wonderful letter in the world. As a result of that wonderful letter we met several times and discussed the world and his wife at length and intimately. A year later I suggested that we might get married, and she said: "It would be just as well." We expected violent opposition on the part of the gallant General, for political reasons, and we got it, hot and strong. The General's liver was so bad that it finished him off before your mother had time to tell him we were going to be married in spite of everything.

We were married a few weeks after his funeral, in a registry office near Hampstead, on a cold and damp November morning. As far as I remember the service went something like this: "Now, you two, come over 'ere and we'll soon fix it up. Now then, how does the thing begin? Oh, yes. . . ." And he proceeded with the ceremony, to interrupt it with: "'Ave you got the ring? 'Ere, Halbert, shove some more coal on the fire, will you? It ain't 'arf cold in 'ere." We had a bit more of the ceremony and were then told to sign our names—"Yer proper ones, mind. I don't want no 'anky-panky." So we were married, and the witnesses were Uncle Alan, who is an expert at these things, and your mother's sister, Angela.

We went to Algeria for our honeymoon, and began to talk about you in earnest. Of course, we had mentioned you and discussed your individuality long before. I remember your mother even telling the old General about you. She said he nearly had a fit on the spot. "To think that a daughter of mine, etc." He must have been an old terror. Aunt Angela said he was an old "Bygadsirian," but had lost his old school tie. It took me some time to decipher the school; but it is a good name for it. I suppose honey-

moons are always wonderful. Ours certainly was. We drew up a code of rules for it. I transcribe them for your use when you are married.

1. Complete liberty of action for both, unless, in individual cases, it has been decided otherwise by discussion.

2. No false prudery, except when one or the other really feels a momentary desire for privacy, and then it is to be granted without further discussion.

3. Living apart for at least four weeks every year. This is insisted upon.

4. Single beds.

5. No forced intimacies.

6. No asking me what I want to eat.

7. No interference with what each of us is to wear.

8. No breaking away from old friends.

9. No asking her to stay away with my friends unless she suggests it.

10. Ditto with me.

11. Either of us to leave the room immediately, at the first sign of temper or nagging from either side.

12. Communal purse.

13. Jealousy absolutely forbidden. Punishment for its expression—eight weeks apart instead of four.

14. Complete independence of thought.

And, by the way, son, with reference to number eleven, here is a thing to remember in marriage: "Never let your wife stand between you and the door." Unless you remember this, should you have a nagging wife, you are completely and absolutely done.

Well, those were our fourteen points, and we kept to them strictly, honourably and happily till the end. When we returned from Algeria, I brought your mother down here

and introduced her to all the things that you were to know so well. She started weeding the garden ten minutes after her arrival. I was pleased at that, and it was not long before I realized she had the green hand. Everything grew for her, and everything loved growing for her, for they shone forth with stronger colour and gave forth sweeter scent than ever I had known before. She became in a short time the visible expression of the beauty of the house and garden, and when she laughed you could almost imagine the walls laughing with her and the flowers shaking with delight.

Your mother was extremely sensitive to atmosphere. She could spot a haunted house like a shama can a fly, and she could lead you straight to that part of a haunted house where the horror had its home. You know the dip in the big field the other side of our five-acre where the right-of-way passes? Well, she felt the atmosphere of that in her first walk, and knew what the sorrow had been. We came to know each other extremely well. At meals we hardly spoke. There was no need: we were just extremely happy. She was amazingly tactful. She never disturbed me at my writing, and never encroached upon my thoughts without an invitation. Son, you do not know how wonderful that is. When I stayed late at the club, should we be passing a few days in London, there was never a reproach. It was always:

“Did you have a grand time at the club?”

“Yes.”

“I’m so glad.”

And she was, son; she was. It was not a case, as it is with some, that she was lonely and pining away without me and only said that to please. No; she could never be lonely. Her mind was too occupied, and she loved read-

ing and playing the piano. She played better than I did on the piano, but not so well on the organ. But she sang beautifully, and her voice had the pitch I love—a full, round contralto. Do you remember her singing “*Il n’est point d’amour sans peine*”? She sang that better than anyone else in the world.

I took her to her first Socialist meeting; how she thrilled everyone when she sang “*England, Arise,*” and “*God Save the People.*” She never knew there were such stirring words to be sung on political platforms. She had quite a shock when she heard about the land enclosure acts and the cotton factory conditions of the last century. She had never seen a slum before I took her over the Black Country. She never knew there were people who could neither read nor write until I took her into the worst type of public-house I could find. She heard words there for which she had much more refined names in her own vocabulary.

She was a tall woman, and wonderfully built; narrower in the hips than usual, and consequently her legs were straighter. You have the same hands, and the same habit of drawing down the corners of your mouth before you smile. Her nose had the smallest nostrils I have ever seen, and her skin was wonderfully close-knit. You have lost there, for you have my skin and nose. Her teeth were too perfect to be true, but, like so many other things in life, were better to look at than they were useful.

We went to St. Malo that first summer for our holiday, and it was there she told me that you had every intention of coming to stay about the November following. I became quite excited at the thought, and then and there we planned about you, as I have explained in an earlier chapter.

I took your mother to visit a workhouse during one of

our many tours of inspection, and the unnecessarily charming smile of the master to the inmates took neither of us in. We visited the mental ward, and in the garden an old woman came up to us and asked whether the birds had begun to sing yet, as she was rather deaf and couldn't hear. I shouted a "No" to her, and she sighed and nodded her head. "They told me they would let me out when the birds began to sing," she said, and hobbled off. The matron in charge of the women mental cases had arranged about ten of them in a row ready to sing to us. They sang "There is a Green Hill." It was a terrible noise, and a worse sight. They did not understand a word they were singing. The mockery of it was ghastly. We prayed that night that you would always have compassion on mental affliction.

We spent long, happy afternoons in the picture galleries, and several Sundays at concerts. No two people could have taken more trouble over you than we did. Then the time drew near; we became more and more excited, and your mother said anyone would think it was I that was going to have the baby. And you came at last, and I was in the room the whole time, and you were no trouble at all and did not quite weigh eight pounds. You looked just about a hundred and fifty and terribly serious. Your mother was soon better, and you waxed fat and lusty, and sang loudly whenever you could. You were born with quite a thick crop of black hair. I forgot to tell you that.

During the first year of your life, we were very silly about you. Every time we heard you cough we thought you would choke to death; every time you sneezed we were certain you had apoplexy, and every time you cried we were convinced you were about to die. I was so sure you were a genius that when you did not talk immediately six months

were up I was terrified that you were dumb. Oh, the agony of the first child. I thought if we had had others, by the time we had finished with you, they could have yelled themselves purple and we should not have turned a hair!

We were very lucky over your nurse; no one could have tended you better. Not that you were difficult, except when I was dressing you. Why you waited till the safety-pin was ready for its dive into the flap of your binder before you started on physical exercises, I cannot imagine, but you always did. And not one trick and done with it, but a series of spasmodic jerks, accompanied by a lot of bubble-blowing and gurgling.

You were three only too soon, and our little *ménage à trois* was the happiest in the world. Your mother and I used to go up on to the Chilterns on fine summer days and make landscape sketches for our own selfish joy, and it was after one of these expeditions that our trouble started. A thunderstorm rolled up rapidly, covering us from head to foot in rain before we were aware of the sudden change. It did not last long; soon the sun came out and it was warm again. Foolishly we went on painting, in our damp clothes, and continued till the cool of the evening, when we packed up and walked slowly home, talking and singing to the sunset.

At midnight your mother woke me up. She could not sleep. I felt her brow. She was feverish. I filled a hot-water bottle for her, and gave her two aspirins. She fell into a heavy sleep. As dawn came I heard her whispering my name. I went over to her, and she said:

"Don't be angry with me, dearest, but I know it will soon be over."

"Good," I said, thinking she meant the fever.

She smiled a little and shook her head.



"I meant," she whispered, "I am going to die. They are coming to fetch me."

I said: "Nonsense," or something equally fatuous, but felt strangely disturbed, for I knew her psychic power and dreaded that she might prove right.

The next day I took her temperature; it was far too high for my liking. I rang up Reading Hospital for a nurse; she would not have a doctor any more than I would have done in the circumstances.

I went to meet the nurse at the station, and told her that your mother had a chill and that her heart was not so strong as it ought to have been. We made her as comfortable as possible.

In the afternoon she complained of pain round the heart and began to show signs of difficulty in breathing. Endocarditis, rushing at terrific speed on top of this fever, seemed to be indicated. I was worried, as the nurse now refused to stay without "medical" supervision; so I sent for the local doctor to reassure both her and myself. I gave in, in fact, after years of denouncing physicians and praising surgeons; but I knew he could do nothing. The fool said she only had a chill, and that the pain under her heart was due to acidity. I told him he did not know what he was talking about, and he left, leaving me a prescription for her. I examined his paper, and sure enough he had prescribed carbonate of soda. I tore it into shreds and wept with impotence.

I sat with your mother from eleven that night until half-past two. She was breathing painfully now, and my left arm was cramped with holding her to me. She tried to speak, and I bent to catch her words. "They are holding flowers in their hands," she whispered, and I knew they had

come for her. I slipped my numbed arm from around her, and laid her head back on the pillow, and I knelt at her bedside and prayed for her life. I begged God to spare her for your sake; and then I was ashamed of myself, and told God I must not grudge her services should they be wanted elsewhere. I listened with straining ears for the end, fearful of hearing that grating intake of breath that seems always to precede the outgoing of the spirit. It never happened. In the darkness of the room there seemed to glow a soft blue light all over the length of her body, and as I watched this I suddenly realized she had stopped breathing.

As you know, I took your mother's ashes to El Kantara, and five miles from there, high on the Aures, I scattered her ashes towards the south. When I came back I loved you more than I ever thought possible.

Among your mother's things were two letters, one for me, and one for you—to be opened when you are twenty-one. This is what your mother wrote to me, with nothing taken out:

“Beloved, for some time past I have had a presentiment that I am not long for this world, but I have not told you, for I knew it would worry you. This is, therefore, a farewell letter, but if you do not wish to read it because of your sorrow, burn it at once, for there is nothing important in it; it is only a written confession of my love for you. You have been the ideal husband, and I want you to go on being the ideal father, because we know that the important thing is the future, and John is the future for us. You have always been so considerate and sweet to me, and sometimes, perhaps, I haven't shown how much I appreciate it. If I have failed you as a wife I can only claim it was not through want of

trying or loving. I shall ask God to let me watch over you from the other side if I am worthy, and I can ask no more lovely duty. I know you won't be stupid about my having gone, but do you mind if I am a little selfish and ask you to dine alone once a year on my birthday and set a seat for me? When John is old enough, let him sit with you also. I don't want him ever to feel that he is not part of us. Hang on to John, beloved, there is so much of me in him—at least I feel there must be, for I tried hard enough to implant it during his creation. I meant this letter to be very beautiful and full of lovely things, but you can write them better than I, and you know what I think of you. Bless you for ever and ever, beloved. I love you now and I shall go on loving you. I wrote this funny little thing for you, dearest.

Bless you, beloved, bless you now,  
 And every evening that shall come and pass.  
 The night wind whispers through the cedar tree,  
 The dew is rising on the short-mown grass.  
 Good night, beloved, know that here I wait  
 And kiss your lovely eyelids with my eyes.  
 Breathe gently, gently, do not stir nor wake,  
 The day beginning tells you when to rise.  
 For now it's dark, with but the moon for light.  
 Sleep softly, darling love, good night, good night.

I'm not a coward to go, beloved, I know, because it isn't my fault; but I do feel one. Always and always and always your adoring Woman."

And that, son, is a very inadequate description of bits and pieces of the only woman in my life that has meant anything real, and if you find one half as wonderful you will be happier than you can possibly imagine.

## CHAPTER TWELVE

Of spiritualism—Destiny—Manual work—Prostitution—  
Environment—Of beauty.

THIS chapter is the outcome of thought and experience, and I do not ask you to accept everything in it without much examination. It contains a belief that I found extremely suited to myself, but may not necessarily suit you.

It must seem obvious to anyone who has ever thought on the subject that we are all on this earth for some purpose, and that the complicated system of human advancement or retrogression is no mere haphazard and useless design. Therefore I assert that the sole object of our existence here is to clear away the material encumbrances from the Soul, and thereby enable It to progress from this earth sphere towards the Infinite. Its method of so doing is very similar to the progress of a child at school from the bottom form to the top one. This earth is not the lowest stratum of soul progress, but is about the third; the first being the grey darkness of pulsating, amalgamating gases forming the material bodies that are to receive the divine spark. It is a world of struggle for form: a world preparing the shells that are to receive the soul-force. The second is a land of eternal twilight, in which the first glimmerings of the soul-force are noticed, and where everything is heavy, dragging, and negative. As this soul-force develops, the bodies on the earth planet become ready to receive it. It is

born into the world with the body of the new-born child, and, as I have explained before, its development is dependent upon the sublimation of the material. When the course of the body has been run the Soul is forced to move on, but according to the degree of materialism with which it has been surrounded on the earth sphere, it may find itself chained to the earth, or even returned from the astral plane for further development on the earth sphere. Above and beyond the astral plane, which is the one for the reception of spirits that have left the earth plane, are six other spheres of continual spiritual development culminating in the Christ sphere, or Paradise, that has been the ideal of all religions since the world began. Farther still into the realm of the God-force we reach the Infinite, where shape and form (as we know them) are lost, and the God-force is expressed by atmosphere and intangible power-rays of infinite strength and spirituality. The object of all this struggle is the defeat of evil, and it is well to remember that the evil we know of, and the good we know of, are purely relative to each sphere. That is to say, however evil a man may be on this earth plane of ours, his evil is one better than the greatest evil of the plane below; and conversely, however good one may be on this earth plane, that state is the least good on the planes above us.

Body is not the man. Spirit is the man. That is why anything that is added to the body or material side of the man, such as too great riches, titles, or material power, veils the spirit and asserts the importance of materialism over spirituality. Thus we see clearly the impotence of the Churches, for although they recite this when reading from the Bible, or even in their sermons, they do nothing, either in connection with their own profession or with the running

of the country, to suppress materialism to the aggrandizement of the spiritual forces of man. Perhaps they do not realize its colossal importance. When a spirit leaves the body for ever—which happening is called death—it finds itself in the astral plane, tired and bewildered. This spirit is still in the form of the body it has just left, and although physical pain is absent, it still bears the marks of ailment or incapacity it may have possessed, and only after some time does it become whole and assume the appearance of the body at its best period of earthly life. While the spirit is still bewildered, it will be tended and helped by those who have come to the astral plane especially for the purpose. It is often extremely hard for these helping spirits to make the new arrival realize that he has passed over, and, in some cases, so materially attracted is he to earth conditions that he may become earth-bound for some time to come, being unable to advance to a higher plane. Sorrow is also shown by those who, although not materially attached to the earth, are unhappy at leaving their loved ones; and it is often only after much explanation that they can be made to realize how large is the opportunity for guiding and helping those they have left behind. From the astral plane, shortly after passing over, we have the majority of spirit communications. A great outpouring of power is necessary before spirits can attune themselves sufficiently to earth conditions to enable them to communicate, and then they can only do so through someone possessing mediumistic gifts. A medium sends out receiving rays that are visible to those desiring to communicate, and then the attempt is made at contact with varied results. In this there is an exact parallel with wireless. The transmitter gives out power, the receiving-set picks it up.

When one realizes how difficult it is to tune in to certain stations on a materialistic wireless receiving-set, it is easy to understand the problems of so doing with anything so complicated as a human brain to interfere with, distort or divert the message; for in spiritualism the thoughts of the human brain are often very hard to eliminate. At first, the only things the spirit realizes are its new life in the absence of darkness and shadows; the fact that speech is unnecessary, conversation being carried on by thought; the speed of travel and the lightness in movement; the absence of time; and the duties to which it has been assigned, and which may consist in being taught, helping those on the earth plane, or inspiring individuals to perfection in special qualities. It does not know the future. It only senses the trend of affairs. It has no connection with materialism unless that materialism has a direct effect on the creative powers of the one who is to be looked after. So much misunderstanding of the happenings at séances is due to the attitude of sitters and others, who imagine that six months after earthly death the spirit has already had a long conversation with God, and therefore knows all His intentions.

You will hear a great deal in life about Destiny, and I want to explain this to you from a spiritualist point of view. The life of individuals on earth is like a great tapestry in which everyone is a small thread. The tapestry picture or plan is already made, and everyone's special place is clearly defined. Your life may be the light colour of the underside of a blade of grass in the foreground of the tapestry; the shadow round the eye on a figure in the tapestry; the lightened corner of half a brick in a building in the tapestry. Your destiny is to follow the course of the thread. Your feet are set upon it: things will be put

in your way to continue your journey. You may suddenly stop and turn to the right or left, turn back and vanish momentarily into the warp or woof, but you are still following your destiny and your presence in the tapestry is essential to the whole. Never forget that. No man is useless. We must never scoff at a man who is driven down and upon whom misfortune has come, for we do not know whether it is not his destiny, or whether, by constant refusal to fulfil it, his thread has been plucked out or his colour has faded. The longer one lives the more certain one becomes of the truth of Destiny. Take a man who has made a material success of his life. We know his material prosperity has been given him to test the development of his spiritual qualities, but we also can see quite clearly that it is not entirely the qualities he possesses that have given him his position. It is to a very great extent chance, or what we are pleased to call luck. The opportunity has been given him, and he has made full use of it. You must never despair when an opportunity for material advancement comes along, and, just when you think material comfort is within your grasp, it falls away from you. It may be the twist of the thread; it may be to check too great a love of materialism; it may be to free you for some other and more important duty. I have found in my life so many times that when one door shuts, another opens. Often this is hard to bear, but it is Destiny: it is for a purpose: there is a scheme of things, and we are part and parcel of it. Never feel useless because your life may be the thread upon which the shadow falls, for how can the high-lights and the bright tones mean anything without the contrast? It is of equal service to God to be a supporting shadow as it is to be a high-light which needs your support, although



it may not realize it at the time. But if the high-light thinks too much of itself there is a greater light than he, and that Light can make his colour fade and become dirty until you stand out as the higher tone-value, and a new high-light is threaded into you for you to help.

You are three things—spirit, body and mind, and the latter is the combination of the two former in order to enable you to function as a whole on this earth plane. You see here again the trinity—the three things that make one. It seems to be a recurring numeral in the scheme of affairs on this earth, and this has been responsible for its transference to heavenly things by Churches and white magicians. Because “all service ranks the same with God,” I want you always to love service. And from this I mean all service, from being a cabinet minister and serving your country and all countries, to going into your house and cutting a slice of bread and butter to give with your own hands to one who is hungry. Never let middle-class morality capture you to the extent of thinking you are “too proud” for this or that kind of work. Go and labour with your hands, clean out drains, empty slops, wash up dishes and take joy in doing it. Go on. Argue about this. There is no manual work that demeans. Work ennobles—and that which you do for others is service, and therefore the first work. This is why I always feel that the work of doctors and nurses is so glorious, and why I would prefer working in the sewers of a great city to speculating with other people’s money or my own on the Stock Exchange. The old Church custom of washing the feet of the poor, which was based on Christ’s action, always seems to me one of the few religious symbolic gestures that are really beautiful, but it is not popular these days. One

of the finest acts of this kind that ever happened was done by a friend of mine whom you have often admired speaking on political platforms. He happened to be in a crowded railway carriage on a long journey, and in front of him was a young mother with her baby, who was ill. Half-way through the journey, the heat and motion of the train made the baby violently sick, and not only the mother but a stranger sitting beside her were splashed. The occupants of the carriage were indignant and disgusted. The mother was confused, worried and in despair. My friend took his own handkerchief and cleansed the skirt of the stranger and the mother, and cleaned the floor with a newspaper. The gratitude on the mother's face must have been a glorious reward. The interesting point is that probably each of the occupants would have done the same had he been alone with the mother; but to do such a thing in public is too much for little people. That is only an instance of what I mean by service, and it brings its own reward in unexpected ways as a sort of compensation to make it easier for us to progress. There is also a danger of being self-righteous in such matters.

I have mentioned before why I am against capital punishment, and I can repeat it with reference to our tapestry simile. We have no right to pull out a thread. We are interfering with God's work, and the most evil part of it is that we try to hide our individual action in mob acquiescence. If every judge who condemned men to death had to do his own hanging, it would be more honest. Life's struggle for spiritual progress is always between the gentleness of the divine and the cruelty of mass humanity, urged on by the national forces that have been encouraged by man's devotion to material riches. The things that veil

the Soul are *not* having a drink in a public-house, or having intimate relations with a prostitute, but being cruel and unforgiving, persecuting, slandering; deceiving; depriving people of the means of existence by taking more than your share; hating people; stagnating and not using your qualities for the betterment of humanity; and being unjust. The things your body does can only spiritually affect your body; but what your mind does affects your spirit and those of others; for the body has no atmosphere of itself, but the spirit exudes and its rays are received by sensitive spirits and have great effect. That is why I hold prostitution of the body to be of little account compared with prostitution of the mind, and look upon "woman's honour" as important only when it affects the mind and through it the Soul. Although your Ego—your individuality which is a mental state—must be developed to the full, it must never develop to the spiritual harm of another. If your Ego insists that you shall walk down Piccadilly with no clothes on, you will be arrested and probably imprisoned, and several old women of both sexes may say that they are shocked, but, in that particular case, you have done nothing to their spirits. It would only be their man-made moral code that was offended. The same people do not become nearly so worried if they see a naked Zulu in Natal. I believe some missionaries do even then, but they are of no consequence; for religious teaching that looks upon the wearing of clothes as a preliminary act of faith we need not be concerned with here.

The constant cry of the people that you cannot change human nature is the denial of all spiritual progress, and the fact that in England we have become so much more thoughtful towards dumb animals in the last hundred years

completely escapes their notice. Far the best way to change people for the better is by example. The second way is by moving the causes that produce evil; and the third by legislation. To support my contention on the second matter, I always quote the story of the man who gave shelter to a tramp one night, and, placing him in a luxurious bedroom with silver hair-brushes on the dressing-table, was surprised to find that the tramp had left, well laden, before breakfast. Had he been placed in a bare room the theft would not have been committed. I am afraid I cannot get excited over theft as a crime when it is by a poor man from a rich one, but I can when it is the other way round, because for a poor man to steal so that he can eat seems to cry a protest against a badly organized system of society, but for a rich man to steal—it must mean material greed of possessions, which is of the earth and exceeding earthly.

I dare say you wonder why some Churches are antagonistic to those who believe in communication with the dead. I think the answer is obvious. The messages from the other side speak of God and Christ as two—God an Infinite Force and Christ as a highly developed spirit, entirely human when on this earth plane. The messages are not concerned with ritual or dogma; they are simple and understandable. They urge peace and gentleness always; not only until the declaration of wars, when the subject immediately becomes taboo. They bring comfort to the bereaved, and are not particularly concerned whether the person before his passing was a member of some Church or other; or even whether he confessed his sins, for a confession under fear of an imaginary hell-fire is hardly the sort to do much good in the next world. The time is coming, and coming rapidly, when Spiritualism or com-

munication with the departed will be the sole religion; when churches will even be emptier than they are now, and when religion and politics will be the same. In this event the Church will be returning to its very earliest days, when spirits were "tested," and when the appearance of Christ's spirit to his disciples was termed not a resurrection of the body, but looked on as a visiting by the spirit of one who had passed over to those he loved. We are all mediumistic to a certain extent, but most of us are undeveloped. Some are clairaudient, some clairvoyant; some sensitive to atmosphere of places, some sensitive to the auras of people. Some have forewarnings; some have memories of spirit wanderings that result in their knowing all about places and people they have never seen, and only realizing it when, years after, they may be visiting these people or places. All these gifts are generally discarded from the minds of their possessors with some such remark as: "Wasn't it funny?" or "It gave me quite a turn," or "Of course I don't believe in it." Anything—anything to prevent thought on the subject.

Every year comfort is brought to many, and the fear of death removed from many, by the understanding of even those few things I have tried to tell you. Yet for this comfort, for the removal of this fear, clergy of many beliefs accuse those who use such methods of communication of devilry and evil. Give me that devilry, son; for me it is of God. Give me that evil; for me it is good. But then in religions, as in politics, as Bishop Warburton said to Lord Sandwich: "Orthodoxy, my lord, is my doxy—heterodoxy is another man's doxy." We do not all agree: that is left till later: when the humbug and hypocrisy with which we surround our lives have been burnt away by the glow of the

God-force that is waiting to beat upon us in a happier and brighter world than this. Brightness—that is the most vivid impression in the next sphere, they tell us; the brightness of the colours. When you go to Algeria you will be astonished by the brightness there, and if you realize that the brightness that awaits you afterwards is six and seven times as strong, you will realize something of the glory. And colour and sound are almost one. Music is interpreted in colour, and colour in music. Blue is spiritual, yellow intellectual, and the auras of people on this earth plane have those colours in them, but they are only visible to the clairvoyants. Flowers have life, and beauty comes into its own. Beauty through colour and scent and touch—thought-touch—the creation of a solid by thought from something etheric. Colour is so important that it is tragic how little we have in our country. The uniformly grey cities with their uniformly dark doors! Beauty, it seems, is of so little importance to us, even when it can be created without expense. Take a little thing, quite in passing. Why, oh, why must our postage-stamps be the ugliest in the world? Where is the beauty in the stamped envelopes of our post offices—that dirty chocolate backing to a decapitated bearded head? Or the grey-brown stamp with two mottled dolphins playing rub-noses?

We should have more colour, and we should be the happier for it. Watch, when the sun brings out the colours in the parks, how pleased people become. It is the colours I shall look for when my time is come, and my only fear is that my life here may make my vision grey. Son, the object of life is the upliftment of the spirit. Love and gentleness have laid a path for you to follow, and you must never deviate from it, or else that land of magnificent distances will be too far off for your tired self ever to reach.

## CHAPTER THIRTEEN

Of all kinds of professions and how they appear to me—  
On the reasons for painting them rather darkly.

BEFORE many years have passed you will have to decide on a profession; possibly you will try your hand at one or two before you find your right place in the material scheme of things. There are hundreds of professions to follow, but owing to our extremely muddled system of society there are not enough jobs for the number of people requiring them. It may be that in spite of, or because of, my pacifist leanings, you may decide on one of the services. You may "go for a soldier," and because you have had a good education and do not talk an English dialect, but speak with that strange intonation and accent that is called, for some unknown reason, the educated tongue, you will have a chance of being given a commission without knowing anything about the way the men under you live. You will go to Sandhurst or Woolwich and learn a very little about maps and soldiers and marching and drilling, and then, on becoming an officer, you will spend your time in following your profession for about two hours a day, and amusing yourself for the rest of the time. This military work is considered so very hard that you are not allowed to talk about your profession in the officers' mess. If you know

about snaffles and bridles, chorus girls and port, tennis and golf, you will be a successful soldier. If not they will soon get rid of you.

In the Navy you would also receive a commission, and, after being bottled up at sea with a crowd of extremely unimaginative colleagues for the whole time of your cruise, probably take to drink in earnest, or throw yourself overboard. At the age of about thirty-five, unless you are extremely lucky, you will be removed from the Navy, and have to start looking for a job. The kind of occupations you might then try to adopt would be carpentry, electricity or greyhound racing: the first two being from experience, and the last from lack of it.

If the Air Force appeals to you, you will find it a thrilling way to finish off things quickly. You will wear a very smart uniform with an incredible head-dress, and will have a chance of earning more medals than is possible in peace time in either the Army or Navy. If you are fond of aeroplanes it would be the best thing possible. It is the ideal profession for the individualist, for you are placed in a position of trust at a very early stage, and have to rely entirely on yourself. The long lonelines are good for the mind, and if you like killing you can equal the "Tailor of Gloucester" by killing as many men at one blow as a heavy gunner.

Military discipline is good for everyone provided his superiors are not jealous of his excellence in drill; because if there is one thing in the British Army you must not do, it is to appear to take too much interest in your job. You may play polo with excessive skill, and even write a pamphlet on the subject, but you are not expected to show this zeal in your real profession.



Now for a more peaceful occupation. The police. In the old days the educated class never entered the police force except as chief constables, after having retired from the Army because the work was too strenuous; but to-day there is a special little niche for you people as inspectors of police after having passed through a training college. This idea has just been advocated in order to prevent the police from having any political views except Tory ones—which, by this time, you will realize are not political views at all, but just the “proper, patriotic views” all “decent people” ought to hold. You will not have to do anything so dull as point-duty, nor anything so exciting as hiding behind a tree in Hyde Park in order to arrest people who are striving to increase the birth-rate; but you will have a nice uniform and plenty of power. You will not be allowed to join the Police Federation, because that takes up a lot of time, but you can join the police band or the cricket or football teams, and have every afternoon off.

Should you prefer some occupation that includes the thrills of gambling and therefore the opportunity for making money, you could join the Stock Exchange, where, with a number of clients dependent upon you, you buy and sell stocks and shares, or “do as many people down” as you benefit. The great art is to obtain the exact proportion. In the eighteenth century no member of the gentry was connected with the Stock Exchange, and members were not even allowed in a gentleman’s house; but to-day it is the short cut from *bourgeoisie* to gentility, and no country house-party is complete without one or two stock-brokers to give tone to the affair. These people all wear black clothes in sombre reference to the money god, and often a buttonhole on successful days. They must not be con-

fused with bankers, for these are archangels of the money god and a cut above the broker.

It may be that the soil calls you, but for that you want capital, and you cannot get capital from me because I have not any. If, however, you can get it from somebody else, there is a variety of interests to follow. Chicken-farming, which is very hard work and very binding; dairy-farming; pig-farming; fruit-farming; stock-farming; market gardening and cereal-farming. In all of these you will have the opportunity of seeing how much money can be wasted by the lack of co-operation between you and your fellow farmers. You can see your chicks eaten by rats, your poultry driven wild by foxhounds galloping through their fields; milk turning sour in the hot weather before it is sold—if it ever is; bacon going down in price the moment you have bought your pigs; the frost killing your fruit trees and American blight sapping their strength; your cattle having foot and mouth disease and being destroyed; no market for your vegetables, or, if there be one, prices so low that the vegetables are not worth picking; oats, wheat and barley paying you less than the cost of harvesting. Not a very pretty picture; but you need not believe it. If I show you the worst side of these professions, and you choose the least bad, you may do well. Farming may lose you money, but you can live cheaply. That is its greatest advantage, besides being able to wear leather gaiters all the year round, and to spit over a five-barred gate in contemplation of the soil.

And what about the Church? If you are choosing it, as many do, as a profession and not a calling, go for the Church of England. It is the best paid, and once you get a living, nothing on earth can turn you out unless you take up rescue work among young women and combine business

with pleasure. When they make you a bishop you automatically become one of our rulers, for you sit in the House of Lords and are not expected to worry over anything that affects the lives of your flock, unless it be some argument about the prayer-book, which, of course, has no effect on anyone's life—or death, for that matter. You will have to preside at bazaars and other functions, and you may be invited to dine with the squire once a year. Try to choose a good squire with a good cellar. If you are a Non-conformist you will be expected to be much more concerned about the drink question and sweepstakes than about religion; but you have one advantage. You can be gloriously inconsistent, for you can denounce sweepstakes as gambling while having a private flutter on the Stock Exchange. One has not been blessed with middle-class morality: the other has. If you prefer the Roman Church you will be very comfortable, for you never need decide anything or hold any opinions. You just look it up in a book and it is bound to be right. These people, however, make good monks, and, if I were you, that calling would be answered. It is better than so many occupations, because it is a calling and not merely a profession.

One very paying profession, by no means overcrowded, is that of undertaker. He never suffers from slump, and does wonderfully well out of our climate. He has only two things to fear: that people might start to think more of the living than the dead, in which case the money wasted at funerals might be used up before the man died; and that the English physicians should improve. Neither is very likely at the moment.

Nevertheless, of all professions medicine is the noblest, for every act in its professional capacity is intended to make

someone suffer less; in this we may assume it to be unique. Although medicine has perhaps advanced less in the last thirty years than any other science, the fault is not so much in the doctors as in their training and method of employment. Doctors are lucky, for they have managed to make people believe in them implicitly, much to the advantage of themselves and the undertakers. What they have achieved to warrant this I have never been able to understand. Surgeons, on the other hand, one can appreciate, for after an operation, whatever the result, it is evident that something intended to make the patient better has definitely been done. But physicians, with their humming and hawing and contradictions and medicine . . . well, they do not know very much.

Do you want to be an architect and erect glorious buildings in gigantic towns or lovely houses in a green countryside? Well, you will not have the chance; for all that an architect has to do in England is to build something square and solid with plenty of windows and plenty of draughts, fix a lot of pipes down the side of it and put a plug-hole on the top. In the country he must build a grey box with a grey slate roof, have a water-closet fixed upstairs which does not flush, and see that even with a fire in every bedroom no more than one-eighth of the house shall be above freezing point in the winter or below boiling point in the summer. For this he will get a string of letters after his name, and have the effrontery to call himself an artist.

If music be your predilection, be prepared for a life of extreme poverty, and a realization that Englishmen would rather listen to twenty gramophone records than one real orchestra. You may be the finest pianist in the world, but more money is to be made here by trundling a barrel-organ

round than in a concert hall, unless you give the public negro music or some melody whose attached words have some reference to "mother," "blue skies," or "Union Jacks." I believe if you sing slightly indecent songs in restaurants, frequented by people in evening dress, you can make quite a lot of money: but there's great competition. Among the lower *bourgeoisie* the cornet's an extremely popular instrument, possibly because it reminds them of the sort of noise they expect to hear on the Day of Judgment when the prizes will be given away. A mouth-organ is useful at a smoking concert, and a violin in drawing-rooms; and I have heard that solos on the double-bass were once popular at Rosherville. You will find it an advantage to have a foreign-sounding name if you go in professionally for music; but be careful not to choose a nationality with which we may be at war. An American name is as good as any.

It may be you will want to write. That is a common urge, and the best way to begin is to get a job on a paper and have a regular occupation, expressing yourself in your spare time. Free lance work is fascinating, but it takes a long time to build up success, and is often uncertain, for just when you think you have made contact with a paper, the editor is sacked and the new man does not like your "stuff." If you write novels you have to remember the terrific competition, and realize that it is not literature that sells but a well-told tale on a well-worn theme. If it be a play you wish to write, there are compensations if it is accepted, for the thrill of a first night of your own play is worth a hundred dates of book-publication. If you do manage to write a successful play you should be set up for life, for there is more and quicker money in it than in the average

successful novel. Literature is another occupation for the individualist, and, within bounds, you can express yourself to your utmost satisfaction. Popularity, however, is never a thing to be courted, least of all in self-expression, for then it ceases to be even that.

A business career may attract you; but in this, unless your destiny be an uncommon one, it is difficult to rise, and the plums of office are kept for the aged, or for the sons of the management. You might like the actual machine side of big business, or the book-keeping side, or the direction, but unless you are interested in seeing things made out of raw material, or enjoy the thrill of under-selling your competitors, you will be disappointed. The interest for you might lie in the handling of men, the study of the trade union world and of the association of employers. You will find them both so exactly alike in pig-headedness and stupidity that you will not wonder at their disagreement. They both so strongly possess the Tory mentality of "anything to prevent a change" that it seems marvellous that anything is produced at all, and not at all surprising to find that industry is on its last legs in England. British capitalism is like the schoolboy that over-bowled himself when young, and has been incapable of getting a wicket ever since; it was the pioneer of the game, and its memories still lie back in the beginning, and it feels that what was good enough in the old days is good enough now. Unfortunately, this argument is used with reference to personal bodies, and brains as well.

Engineering, in all its many branches, once had an extremely bright future, but to-day it also is suffering, and the only engineering on a large scale is in Russia. Considering the amount of industrial sabotage going on there,

I should not be surprised if the same rate of development does not continue until you are old enough to enter a profession.

What about politics? That should be as much a profession as anything else, for it is certainly more than a full-time job. You start by courting a constituency; and when you have persuaded its electors that what you advocate would be good for them, you will be elected. The moment you begin to carry out your promises there will probably be another election, and you will be beaten. The whole subconscious object of the British electorate is to see that no member carries out any of the things for which he was elected. If you belong to a party that upholds the present system of society, you will be more valuable to it if you are a graduate of a British university and an occupier of business premises, for then you can vote three times at an election, and that is very useful in order to calculate the majority of supporters for the policy of leaving things as they are. If you obey the party machine humbly and faithfully for about fifteen years you may become a party whip, and either remain one or become a minister until you are too old to think at all or have made yourself a nuisance to your fellow members. Then you are made a peer, and can continue to rule the country, even after coming out of jail: so you see the House of Lords has its advantages. You can do nothing, however, in politics that has not been done before, so it is no good changing your party to suit the temper of the country, or preaching a doctrine for thirty-five years and then running away from it, or attacking the House of Lords and then sitting in it. It is all as old as the hills, and you will soon realize, if you are a member of the Government, that when it comes to carrying out reforms people

are all equally ineffective, because they never realize the importance of Voltaire's maxim that "*les petites considerations sont le tombeau des grandes choses.*"

The Law is an overcrowded profession, and extremely unpleasant, for when you are not driving some wretched fellow to prison or the gallows, you are probably pleading for someone you know to be in the wrong. If you are successful you will become rich, but you will probably have one of those distressing minds which imagine that everything can be defined in legal terms, and spend hours of clouded mental effort in explaining a simple sentence in twenty-five extremely involved paragraphs. This is meant to be very effective, and as the Law has obtained a monopoly of life, just as Medicine and the Church have of illness and death respectively, people invariably think what the Law says is correct and sacrosanct. I do not like the profession, and I dislike the casual way in which human beings judge and prosecute their fellow men.

To change the subject: what about being a shopkeeper? At this you can have great fun, and be perfectly certain that no one will consider you a profiteer even if you do advertise a sale with a twenty-five per cent. discount to purchasers. People never think how much profit you were making on goods before the sale, and they sometimes believe you are selling at a loss. You will be driven mad by women shoppers. They will have the whole contents of a shop displayed on the counter in order to know the joy of saying: "I don't think it is quite the colour. Thank you. Good morning." If you are a fishmonger you will have to put up with this sort of thing: "Now, are you sure it's quite fresh? Yes. Now which was the one? Oh, yes, but I think that one over there looks fresher. Perhaps they



are not to-day's. Oh, they are, are they? What are those in those boxes? Fresh, I expect. I'll have one out of that box there. No, not that one, the one underneath. Yes. . . ." Crash, bang, and then: "Hurt your leg! you were rather clumsy, weren't you?" Plus the smile. A woman thinks she can always get away with a smile even after the box has fallen on your best corn: and she generally can, even after holding the centre of the road in her car for three miles when you are behind and in a hurry. The hours are long in shopkeeping, but it is one of the more congenial jobs if you are interested in the kind of goods you sell.

If you want an insight into the workings of capitalism be a chartered accountant. You will be surprised at what you learn of the honesty of business, though in general the secrecy of chartered accountants is more abject than that of the freemasons—and the Lord knows what they have to be secret about that cannot be found in the Old Testament.

If you have a middle-class mind, which God forbid, you may think of going into a bank, when you will be able to vegetate nicely and quietly until such time as you can no longer walk over to the local saloon-bar at middäy. It is extraordinary how the ambition of prosperous lower-middle-class parents leads them to seek bank clerkships for their half-educated sons. There are more cabbages in banks as a result of this ambition than in the whole of Covent Garden on market-day. The only way of being a successful banker is either to belong to a bank-shareholding family, or to be a director of some big business that has many dealings with banks. Whereupon you are given a seat on the board, and there you stay, pushing countries on and off gold standards without understanding a single thing about it. As regards

the herd who stand behind counters, wearing their old grammar school ties in the country and their old wedding ties in the towns, they are lucky if they ever rise to be assistant managers of county branches.

Diplomacy offers openings for those who can pass the examination and give satisfactory answers to the old Etonians who interview them. It is a life of evening dress and opening mail-bags anywhere from Peking to Rio de Janeiro, and the average English diplomat will be able to spend three to five years in any capital, certain of knowing nothing that is going on in the country outside the circle that has the entrée to the embassy. In this career the last thing you must do is to help any of your own countrymen who want information in a foreign capital, and unless you are a person with influence at home, your presence in the chancellery for any purpose other than inviting a third secretary to a game of tennis is *de trop*. Owing to the present dearth of kings about the place, diplomacy is not so popular as formerly. There is a rumour that one man managed to enter our diplomatic service, when nobody was looking, who had not been at an English public school. Nobody knows where he is or what is his name, but this solitary instance is always quoted by the Foreign Secretary of the day in order to prove the growth of democracy in our class-ridden country in reply to questions in the House of Commons. It is one of the stock departmental answers.

If you are so minded you could compete for a job in one of the London museums. You might get one, and then a strange metamorphosis would take place. Your shoulders would become rounded, your neck would shrink, your head would swell, and glasses would be on your nose. Dust would get into your throat and creep thence into your brain.

You would carry an unrolled umbrella, and your nose would lengthen. Your ankles would grow thin and your trousers short, while your coat would get larger and larger. You would be the greatest living authority on this or that or the other, at a sum of three hundred and fifty pounds a year, rising each year by sufficient shillings to pay your bus fares from Hampstead, where you would certainly live. You would marry a woman who came to inquire where she could find out all about avicularioidea, and would produce a daughter who wanted to go on the stage, and a son who would write comic stories for even more comic magazines.

What do you say to being a schoolmaster? Teaching the young a mass of facts of no importance and never asking questions. Always surrounded by ever-flowing youth and getting older and older and more intolerant yourself. If you teach the richer classes you have long holidays, and that is the compensation. You would teach English history from the same book until you knew it by heart: Latin from the same old Cæsar you covered with ink in your own youth: geography from some old map that had not been altered since the last war—but you would not notice it as long as it showed the capes and the rivers and the mountains. You would see your old pupils return, and find they were looking for a job, and you would have the sad realization thrust upon you that not a single thing you taught them will be of the slightest use to help them in finding one. But you would cheer yourself up over a glass of port to the tune of the old school song, and let fall a silent tear in gratitude that though your teaching has been useless, it has been no more useless than it has always been.

Or would you try the stage, and hope that out of the thousand applicants you might get the job; or the film

world, where inanities are insisted on by men who pride themselves that they are not artists but sound business men? It is a tinsel splendour that soon wanes unless you have the smell of the theatre in your nose, and then nothing can make you swerve in your allegiance.

There are still the colonies. They exist, but the jobs do not; though maybe if you wait long enough you can take the place of someone who left England in order to live, and is now hurrying back in order to die.

Forgive my levity, but if one does not smile at the professions that have not sufficient places for the applicants, one is apt to despair of the situation that has been created by a wrong ethical standard and a false and illogical system of Economics.

## CHAPTER FOURTEEN

Selfishness—Of our littleness—Other thoughts—Depression  
—Of decisions—Ghosts—Of being alone.

I HAVE often said in public that the world would be a better place if everyone spent half an hour a day in thought. The longer I live the more certain I am of the need for it. So many people are prepared to accept other people's opinions: so many people act thoughtlessly: so many are content to answer any question out of the ordinary with: "I don't know: I haven't thought." They will not think about economics, which is the art of material living; about religion, which is the art of spiritual living; about people, or about theories. There are so many things that need working out which can only be done by thought; things intimately connected with one's own philosophy of life. Take selfishness, for instance. Now, suppose you have realized that selfishness is wrong, and that therefore it must be eradicated from your nature, how can you be certain of consistency in your actions towards that end? You might try to give away money to deserving cases; but what if you began to find a joy in so doing? Would not this become a form of self-indulgence? There is a subject to ponder over until you reach the satisfactory answer. It will be of no use to you if I give you my solution, because all solutions are relative to

the individual, and while we are on this subject of relativity to the individual, here is something else to think about: the extraordinary insignificance of individual human beings in the vastness of space and eternity—as has been expressed by a common friend.

Relativity—you cannot understand?  
 There is so much in relativity, but this I'll tell you  
 To make the basis clear. Do you know  
 That this great world, its oceans and its lands,  
 Its teeming multitudes and all its towns,  
 Canals and rivers, railways, and the things its mind does  
 (Making war and peace, and war again),  
 Might all take place in one corpuscle  
 In the bottom of a great big man,  
 Who, in his turn, is but a microscopic  
 Molecule in someone else's tiny toe?

If you start a line of thought on this you will find it very satisfying. And how best to think, ask you? The best position for thought, I find, is lying on your back with hands crossed upon your diaphragm, when, if you are at all tired, you may pass gradually into a most restful kind of coma, and may begin to feel yourself hovering slightly above your body. In this state of semi-trance you can carry out many unsatisfying experiments. People's consciousness in this condition varies to a very great extent, and the phenomena with which I am best acquainted is that of being able to read glorious pages of prose that are written on the ceiling. Twice in my life, before attempting this state, I have placed pad and pencil close at hand to write down what I read, for invariably I have forgotten the words or even the gist of them when I return to normal. Twice I have read, and while reading, taken up the pencil and paper and written rapidly, and twice, on returning to normal,

found I had written nothing. I recommend this experiment if you wish to solve a problem, for although I can never remember the writing that I so clearly perceived, I can always obtain a solution to the problem with which my mind has been occupied.

Thought is the best cure I know for depression, of which there are only three kinds, physical, nervous and psychic. The first two can be cured by medicine, diet and thought, and the last two by thought and analysis. Forebodings of evil, however, generally indicate a mental state due to lack of nervous force. It is therefore very common among masturbators, and need not bring the terrors it does if this be realized. The number of people upon whom these forebodings press is surprising; and this is a sign of the times, for nowadays, so hectic is the rush of life that nervous force is used up before people realize how they are wasting it. In puberty and middle age, and in women at puberty and the change of life, despair is apt to set in very strongly. I remember, in the United States, asking a group of youths how many of them had contemplated suicide, and they all owned to having done so at one time or another. To suggest that suicide is cowardly is extremely stupid and very false, and is born of desire to prevent it by choosing the epithet best calculated to deter an individual, since few people like the accusation of cowardice. For one who believes in the same philosophy as we do it is extremely brave, but excessively stupid, for it only means putting off the life you are destined to lead to a later date, and probably in more unpleasant circumstances as well. For an atheist, and those who believe that there is nothing after this life, and that, at death, we are all snuffed out like a candle without even a wisp of rising smoke, there can be no possible

reason for continued existence the moment one is unhappy, unless it be a sense of humour encouraged by watching the futility of life and the strivings of people to make something out of nothing.

If ever, owing to nervous strain, you find yourself getting depressed, there is one cure better than any other. Go by yourself to live in a wood. There is something about a wood that calms one more than anything else, and the damper it is the better. You need never be lonely among trees, and there are countless insects and animals with which to hold communion. Even the rain, dripping from leaf to leaf, whispers amazingly nice things to you if you care to listen, and should you be taken into the companionship of a wood, you can hear music without having to pay for it, with leaves for the strings and wind for the bows. Woods do not care much about ordinary folk who have no respect for them, and can walk a whole day among trees and not know the names of a single one. Besides, people as a rule tread so clumsily, and know not on what they tread. The birds are such comforters, and you would soon learn how to tell the different kinds by their songs, unless, like a boy I once knew, you became tone-deaf, and unable "to hear for listening," so impressed might you be by the range and diversity. A wood is not a good place for sorrow—only for depression. Crowds of people are the best cure for grief. You do not want to concentrate too much when you have lost someone dear to you; but when your depression is indefinable then it must be analysed. Analysis of your own daily acts is good for future behaviour. If every night you work out your past day's actions and see how they coincide with your own philosophy, you will be training yourself in a consistency that is admirable for your soul.



You will probably find that half your little unkindnesses were due to being in a hurry, or to lack of control, and you will try and remember for the next time. Take care that self-analysis is kept well within bounds, and never start going in for penances, or you will find yourself throwing your sex urge into flagellation or other masochistic forms of mortification. By the time you have done that for about a year, you will be as much good to the world as any other unfortunate imbecile who is probably in a mental asylum.

It is incredible to me that in these days of broader understanding of sexual matters there are still communities of young monks in this country who beat themselves regularly and pretend it is a penance. I find it hard to imagine Christ beating himself for having rebuked the Syro-phœnician woman so harshly, but perhaps that would not be a beatable sin in the eyes of the Church.

It may often happen that in going over the past you feel you have said something unjust. It will be a comfort to realize that there are many degrees of thicknesses of skin, and that which might hurt a gentle, sensitive, and therefore higher nature, would not have the slightest effect on a good, solid materialist. This, of course, is no excuse, but the injustice will be mitigated.

There is plenty of scope for thought on your conception of the ideal state, for without this thought you will be caught out in argument and be ashamed of yourself.

Thought on four dimensions is fun. The germ theory, and the relative truths of Béchamp and Pasteur, for example, as other subjects. The probable happenings in Christ's life of which we have no account. Did He journey east, and if so, where? The reasons that made Rimbaud give up writing poetry. How did the people of Katsina get into

West Africa? I have my theories on all these subjects, and they have all given me happy day-dreams and cultivated the power of thought, giving me a sense of balance. There is never any excuse in life for inaction as a result of thought on a subject that has to be tackled. To say that you see two sides to a question, and that therefore you cannot decide, means that you are incapable of choosing between "better" and "best," and therefore are not fit for a life of decisions at all. If these two sides are perfectly balanced—one saying: "Go on," and the other saying: "Go back"—you had better remain in the middle. That is understandable. Where people go wrong is that when the choice lies between staying still and going on, if they cannot decide, they stay still; whereas, of course, they should go half-way, until someone else can take over the power of decision for them. This most important teaching should be engraved over the Cabinet-room mantelpiece in Downing Street. If you want to think on a really terrible subject that never yields an answer, lie perfectly still in a darkened room and start contemplation on your personal eternity. It is not so terrible if you realize the different self you will be after death; but try imagining what it would be like to live for ever, realizing that you would never die. No wonder the Wandering Jew is a person to be pitied! Into such thoughts as that one weaves terrors that take away all dread of death.

Do you find yourself stopping during a walk and saying to yourself: "On this exact spot, so and so said such and such"? Does your mind fly back several years when some smell brings a memory of some place you have once visited? Do you find yourself listening to someone talking, and wondering where you have heard the same sentences

before? All these may happen, and you will not know the reason. Your mind can recall this, but not that. Your sense of smell may be stronger than your sight or sense of touch. Your memory is therefore patchy. Your senses are not all equally keen, and you are not able to differentiate at once between your conscious and sub-conscious mind. That is what is the matter with you. You see how much there is to do before you perfect yourself, but the only trouble is that unless you are rich and have no occupation, you will not find the time. Strange how rare perfected senses are among those who, you would imagine, had nothing else to do in life but perfect them. Your thoughts can be made immensely powerful if only you have time to work on them. Telepathy can be brought to a pitch as acute as the Yogis know. Perhaps you may be gifted with the power of seeing materialized thought forms, or what is commonly known as ghosts, and you will then understand the power of thought. Violent loves and hates, when projected by thought, have a tendency to cling to the scene of their expression, and when a mediumistic person happens upon the place he is able to pick up that thought form and either think it or, in more perfect conditions, see it. This is not to be confused with the seeing of spirits, for that is entirely different. The supernatural always seems to annoy the masses, and the reason, as with everything else that annoys them, is that they lack understanding. They have no experience, neither have they thought. Their irritation impels them to force others to agree with them, for they are terrified of being alone in an opinion. They wish everyone to resemble themselves. It is pathetic, the lengths to which they will go to force, beg, and even pray others to be as they are. There are few terrors so abject as the fear of

being alone. There should be no reason for such terror, but it is easy to understand, for that which frightens these persons has never been thought out by them. That is, unfortunately, the motto of our people, and the one thing they never fail to live up to.

## CHAPTER FIFTEEN

Of my mistakes with you—The sad story of the lady from India—Jealousy—Of cruelty—How your mother gave away £5—Of the Kaid Ahmar—Of your naughtiness.

IN looking back over our past together, son, there are many little things that I said or did to you which were thoughtless and stupid, and I only hope they made no lasting impression. I know what many of them were, but I shall not remind you, for both our sakes. Children very properly resent too much fussing over them, and, at times, I must have appeared excessively interfering. It is excusable, for when a child is very tiny it is amazingly precious, and because it is so small, we parents are apt to think it will break or stop breathing any minute of the day. When you were out a little late with your nurse I imagined you run over, tossed by a bull, or eaten alive by an old boar, which animal has a great liking for young and tender children. Before you were born I was in a constant state of warfare against an almost overpowering feeling that you would be born blind or hump-backed or dumb; and even after you arrived and we travelled with you, I always had the terrible picture before me of the wretched woman with the two children who was on her way home from India. She had had trouble with the elder one, who was fretful in the Red Sea because of the heat, and in her temporary impatience she threatened to put the child through the porthole if she

did not stop crying. One afternoon when she returned to her cabin, where she had left the two sleeping peacefully, she was petrified to see that the baby had disappeared. After frantic searching and questioning, the elder child owned that she had pushed the baby through the porthole to stop it crying. And people always laugh at that story. Anyway, I expected you to fall out of every window and off every piece of furniture; but you did not. In that particular story, jealousy of the elder for the usurper might have been an additional reason for the tragedy, for it is amazing to what lengths such jealousy in a child may lead it. I always think Charles Dickens missed a chance in "Dombey and Son" by not making the sister jealous of her baby brother. This would have given him a chance to strengthen in interest one of his female characters, at any rate. I am not sorry you are an only child, in case such a situation should have arisen.

Most children dislike being young, and long for the time when they will be grown up. The desire to be younger than you are only comes, if it comes at all, after about thirty-five, when youth, on retrospection, becomes endowed with the same graces as age in the eyes of a child. I even remember overhearing you pray: "Please God, make John a big boy. Amen." And I know exactly how you felt about it at the time. It is nicer being grown up than being a child, except for one thing—and that is a very big thing. When you are grown up your chief concern in life is to make enough money to keep yourself according to your standards, and that is the great difficulty. I always imagine that those who are not bound to work for a living ought to be as happy as the day is long. Supporters of the present state of society are never tired of repeating that

riches do not bring happiness; and, of course, in themselves, they do not. But to possess riches and do good with them, and not have to wonder where the next meal is coming from, must be very comforting; and that position is no more open to temptation than is the position of those in the struggle for existence. You have only to see the lying, deceit and robbery that goes among such people to be convinced of that. The devil may have work for idle hands to do, but he has much more effective work for skilled hands.

I never believe that cruelty is inherent in most children. I believe it to be the outcome of curiosity plus an absence of thought. The desire to see what a fly does when you pull off his wings is sheer curiosity; but it should not be there if the child was trained to think. I hate seeing insects killed, for each insect has its job to do, the same as you and I, and, apart from parasites, insects that hurt only do so if provoked. There is quite enough cruelty in the lower animal world without our adding to it, and it is no excuse to say that because nature is wild and cruel, human nature can be so, too. If we hold that doctrine we put ourselves on a level with the beasts. I wish I had the self-control to be a vegetarian, but I have not, and my love of meat is very real to me. I am sure I should feel better if I did not eat it at all, but there it is. Perhaps when I am old and have time to develop spiritually to the extent I wish, I may be able to be a vegetarian. I tried you as one till the age of five, but either I could not choose the right stuff for you, or, being of such meat-eating parents, you were not fitted for it. We had to let you take to meat, and you certainly improved on that diet. I object to clothing myself in part of an animal that has been killed in the

prime of its life for my own pleasure, and your mother never would wear any furs that were not artificial. I never buy *foie gras* because of the cruelty entailed, but I do wear leather shoes, because I know the animal has already been used for meat, and, as I said before, I am not strict enough on that question to feel qualms of conscience. Of course, consistency in all these things is difficult; but if one does not strive to follow out the ethics of one's philosophy one cannot progress.

I often wish—and I know it is no good wishing—that you had been with us in that first year of our married life. You must have had a desire to be there, for I remember, when you were about four, you seeing the date of our marriage on a wedding present. You were quite indignant when you said: “Do you mean to say when you were married you didn't have children the same day? Why, I am ashamed of you! You ought to have had me born at once.” Then I had to explain more fully. But it would have been jolly for you to enter into all the many different discussions your mother and I indulged in. I have never covered so much ground before or since. I remember we decided that whichever of us was the first to break your perfect faith in our justice towards you should give five pounds away to the first unknown poor person we met. Your mother lost, and her great sorrow at the look of injured amazement on your face was most keenly felt; for there is nothing so terrible as breaking a childhood charm, and belief in the continuity of a certain form of treatment is one of them. Her sorrow was somewhat mitigated, however, by her endeavour to give away the money. The first person she offered it to smiled condescendingly and passed on, tapping his forehead, and rather proud in his discovery of a lunatic



in the street. The second would not accept it, for he was afraid of being run in for stealing. The third took it and ran off as fast as he could, thinking your mother would probably repent.

There is one trouble in always telling the truth to one's children: they are apt to think everyone else also tells them the truth. In this connection I told you the story of Sidi Makloul and the donkey, but as you have probably forgotten it by now, I will repeat it for your edification in its correctly translated form.

"The Kaid Ahmar was a man of great meanness, for rich though he was, he always gave forth that he was poor, and was always begging for the loan of this or that (*hadtha ouilla hadthak*). One day he came to Sidi Makloul and said:

"'O friend of my youth, I have come that thou mightest find grace by lending me thy donkey to bring some palm-wood from the oasis to my house, for my animals are all sick or lent to poor Arabs.'

"Now Sidi Makloul had lent his donkey so often, and had so often passed by the Kaid Ahmar's garden afterwards and found the Kaid's own donkeys standing without labouring, that he determined that he would not do so again.

"'The prophet be witness, friend of my youth, but my donkey is out at work,' replied the Sidi, but at that moment, by the will of Allah, from the end of the court came the braying (*chchik*—what a lovely word) of Sidi Makloul's own beast, and the Kaid Ahmar turned sadly to his friend.

"'O friend of my youth,' he said, 'my face is black;

thou hast deceived me. Thou sayest thy donkey is out at work, and listen, there he is calling.'

"Sidi Maklouf held up his hand and looked straight and innocently at the Kaid.

"'Dost thou believe me or the donkey?' he asked, and Kaid Ahmar's face was blacker still."

If you have time, write down a criticism of the way you have been brought up so far, so that I can add to notes I am making for future use. I shall not mind what you say or how you criticize, for I shall know it is done with the best intentions. You always used to do things "with the best intentions," and even after you drowned the peachick you explained that to me. You had seen me spitting on a "pipped" egg-shell to soften the outside for the chick to break, so it was not really your fault when you plunged a "pipped" pea-hen's egg into the water-tub, calling out at the top of your voice: "Come out, come out, you silly thing, come out: there's so much to do, so much to do." There was not, in this case; for naturally the poor thing was drowned.

It took me quite five minutes to think out a proper retribution for you when you turned all the taps on in the house and ran down the stairs calling: "Fire, fire!" Probably you have forgotten what it was. Your uncle<sup>1</sup> helped me, for he was staying with us at the time. I waited till tea-time, and remarked earnestly to your uncle, in your hearing: "I don't know what to do with John, he is so colossally ignorant that he doesn't know the difference between fire and water." To which your uncle replied:

<sup>1</sup> This was your only real uncle. All the others are only "father's-friend-uncles."

“ I wonder if he ought to see a doctor? ” But you did not want to see a doctor, and it had its effect. Besides, you had to mop all the water up yourself! Ought you to have been smacked? Ought you to have been locked up in a dark room alone? Ought you to have been sent to bed without any supper? I do not think so; but then I am a heterodox parent, and so far, I think, not to your disadvantage.

## CHAPTER SIXTEEN

The thirties—Of old men who are out of date—Middle age—Personality—Of myself when old—Woman in the same position.

WHEN you are in the thirties, son, and therefore half through life, you may imagine in your dreams that the thirties will bring you success in your profession. You may imagine that by then your physical and mental forces are in fine trim, that your superiors will have realized your qualities, and that the world will be a more comfortable place for you than it has been in the past. You will be wrong. This is England, and for the vast majority the thirties mean more responsibility and more work, with the prospects of promotion disappearing as each year passes. The plans you and your wife have woven in the quiet of your homes will unravel, and the "hope that springs eternal" will mock you like the pale ghost it is. England is ruled by the aged, by those whose past theories have been proved wrong time and time again, by the disciples of *laissez-faire* and "safety first." There is no room for new ideas or new treatments: such conceptions are dangerous.

In Parliament the seats of office are held by the old time-servers or the scions of noble or wealthy houses. In business, by the owners' relations or the sixty-five-year-old syco-

phant. In the Services, by those to whom Time has been kind only in its gradual weeding out of the even more old. Every day the world drifts into deeper folly, while the old shibboleths are mouthed by the toothless to the applause of wrinkled hands. Abroad, the reaction to this has produced a revolt of youth. Not the revolt of the thirties and forties, but the uprising of the early twenties, who are venting their suppression on those who lead them to despair. As usual, such a revolt develops unpleasant sides. In England it is impossible for youth to assert itself. We are the only people in Europe of importance who have never revolted in our whole long history, for the two civil wars of the seventeenth century and the Wars of the Roses were but struggles for power between members of one class. Consequently the doctrine of letting oneself be imposed upon, accepting one's lot and respecting tradition, has so entered into our blood that we can see our own children starve, our grandparents be driven to the workhouse, and our liberties denied without raising a finger, except to make a cross at election times in order to make certain that there shall be no change in this extraordinary state of affairs. There is no order in such conditions; and yet one simple Bill would do more to help the unemployment question and put new life into the business of the country than anything else. That Bill would simply forbid anyone over sixty-five to be employed in any capacity whatever, especially in the capacity of adviser. If anyone fears for the results of this last prohibition, let him remember that we have reached the present position entirely as a result of the advice and counsels of these same men. There are thousands of the *petite bourgeoisie* placidly contemplating their sons' future, delighted if they can be turned into bank clerks and ex-

change their caps for bowler hats, and yet content to tolerate a state of affairs wherein those sons will become human cabbages, with no chance of development beyond a certain stage. It is all very well for them to say the way is open. It is—for one in ten thousand; but as long as the top rungs of the ladder are covered by the gouty feet of age, so long will the future of the mass be bounded and stifled. All the greatest things in life have been accomplished before sixty, and even if the man of seventy attains the highest material position, it is the work of his youth that has enabled him to reach that pinnacle. At sixty the arteries begin to harden; the calcium in the human body begins to turn to chalk, and, when once that substance has reached the brain, mental reaction or stagnation sets in, to be greeted with praise from confrères as “the wisdom of age,” “the ripeness of experience,” or “the sanity of a contented mind.” Yes, and in what is this wisdom; in what this experience; with what this contentment? Wisdom in imagining that what worked in 1870 will work as well now. Experience in controlling hansom cab traffic that shall make you fit to control the streets of to-day. Contentment with your own personal lot, and complete oblivion to the situation of your fellow creatures.

The mere fact of finding oneself at some moment or other unemployed is of no consequence in the contemplation of the millions who have been in that situation for years. To see old men clinging to their chairs of office until one is old enough to climb into them oneself; to realize that when and if you get there the fire of your own youth will have died down, and the twilight will have set in: that is the destiny of the thirties as a whole. Fear of change, fear of the future, fear of youth—those are powerful forces and

hard to overthrow; and yet, meanwhile, our country drifts along, rudderless, uncertain; wrapped up in its mania for satisfying the money-changers; fearful to tackle its basic problems, and smug with self-satisfaction. The thirties are a period in life which controls your future years. If you are not certain then of your capabilities, you never will be. It is then that those who employ you should give you the chance to prove your worth; but you never get it. You have thirty more years to wait. Of course, it may be that the bungling of the aged reaches such a pass that war is declared. Then you will be most important. You will be "heroes," "gentlemen," "saviours"; you will be given a uniform, and you will go forth to be killed to save the old men whose "wisdom" and "ripeness of experience" has produced the situation. You will have your chance then. You will be fed on promises, bribed with medals, praised and worshipped, and if you come back at all you will find your places taken (even in the unemployed queue), and the workhouse will be your last haven of rest. No, there is but one thing to do in the thirties, and that is to see that no man or woman holds a job after the sixty-fifth birthday. Then there may be some hope for the world.

Time moves rapidly after thirty-five, and you find yourself not quite so interested as formerly in swimming against the stream, or even in standing up for your beliefs and ideals. It is then that you feel at the parting of the ways, for you are half-way through life. You need encouragement. You are not so sure of always being able to stand alone. You reach out and almost cry: "Father, hold my hand. The world is too much for me."

"Getting and spending, son?"

"No. It's just that I'm being carried on too fast by

the stream, and I don't know how much longer I can stand it."

Your youth will have gone. Your eye is not so certain as before. You will regret youth, whose chief attributes are beauty and energy. The trouble with modern youth, however, is that it considers the former more important. It is, if rich and without ideals; but it is the fire unveiled by smoke which is needed. At thirty you should know something about personality, what it is that attracts, repels or impresses an individual. It is the knowledge (conscious or sub-conscious) of your mental and spiritual superiority which is responsible for what is called personality. This can be developed. It is not a physical matter; it is something you express yourself or feel in others. It can be subdued or brought out, trained to act when you need it. It is increased by a sensitive drawing of personality from others, and sending it out again with your own personality added. Make yourself negative, receive impressions—all the impressions of those you meet, attach them to your own self and radiate the combination by concentrated thought. Practise it, and I will guarantee that eventually you can so control it that you can come, one minute, into an assembly of people and no one will notice your presence: at another time you will enter and many will be aware of you. An attractive personality is largely dependent upon some physical attribute, such as conversation or a smile. An unattractive personality may be caused by a surly or sulky demeanour. Strong personalities are of two kinds—the purely spiritual and the purely mental. Where the spiritual and mental are combined, the most powerful personalities are found. The development of personality is worth spending time and thought upon, for it is of the greatest value in everyday



life. Be careful not to be arrogant, or to vaunt your knowledge. You will not be loved if you do, and to be loved is only second best to loving.

In the thirties the potential strength of your personality appears; you begin to know its limitations, for the thirties are a period of retrospection and analysis. If you have an inward urge to do something before you pass over, this is the time to start, for the forties mean loss of breath, the fifties are the time for congratulating yourself on your futility, and the sixties time to start packing up. If God inflicts upon you a further ten years of life, those are to train you not to be a worry to your friends or relations. The eighties are a tragedy, the nineties a comedy, and the attainment of a century is a stupidity. I should like to pass on at sixty-five and not a day later, but I am afraid I shall be seventy-two before I do. I have always had a feeling that seventy-two would be my time, and then I shall pass over in sheer weariness, having taken to my bed in the firm determination never to get up again. There is no need to be disturbed about this length of life of mine, for on my forty-sixth birthday I shall make over all my worldly possessions to you, and shall be content with a monastic cell, a piano, my books and some painting material. I may come down on you for one or two pairs of thick boots, because I expect to do a deal of walking, but I do not think you will grudge me those. I shall be at home on Wednesdays to visitors, and if anyone should care to drop a franc or two in an old hat "convenient to the doore," well, who is to stop them? This will be in Algeria, of course, so make a practice of coming out in the winter to see me. If I am not in my "marabout" I shall be bathing in the sea. Anybody will tell you, by then, where I am to be found. And do not

forget to bring the children, for I shall be most interested to see them and find out, for myself, how you have brought them up—probably in an entirely different way from my education of you. They will look upon me as an old fool, with old-fashioned ideas and full of indecencies, for I am young enough now to expect the wheel to have turned full circle by that time.

But although this is all great fun, this contemplation of the future is somewhat out of place in my endeavour to warn you of the disappointments of the thirties. However unpleasant this stage of life may be for us, women feel its cruelties much more. If they are married, they will still be trying to keep young, greatly to the advantage of purveyors of cosmetics, and if they are unmarried and have no mental occupation they will be becoming hard and disagreeable. Unmarried, and in work, they are at their best, for they neither have the girlish habit of preening themselves nor are worried with the responsibilities of a home. Their troubles, however, are to come, for Nature, very cruelly, gives them a second difficult period in life in the forties which man escapes. During this time they are as unbearable as a boy of fourteen, and that is saying a good deal. Not that you were as bad as that; but you are an exceptional child, or damned well ought to be.

On the other hand, son, the thirties may be a time when the world lies at your feet; when you are in congenial work and greatly happy. If that be so, you are indeed lucky, and in your happiness you must remember others.

## CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

Of personal contact—Orthodoxy and the other doxy—Of argument—Women again—Political complexions—Of types—Reading faces—Of compassion.

As so much of happiness in life depends upon one's connections with fellow creatures, it is as well to know something that will help in dealings with them. The first thing to realize is that most people are just as sensitive as you are, and just as irrational where that sensitiveness is affected. For instance, you will find that three-quarters of the reason why people dislike one is due to their fancy that one dislikes them. This sort of conversation is typical.

"I met A to-day."

"Awful fellow."

"Oh, I don't know. He was saying how much he admired you."

"Was he? Well, I suppose he's not a bad sort of chap really."

I always make a point of lying about people's attitude towards others where I feel that their mutual dislike is artificial, and I have had many successes and a certain amount of amusement in watching the reactions. Assertion of dislike is often nothing more than a defence, and as most people are on the defensive for nine hours out of twelve it is not surprising. This defence is responsible for most of the harsh things said about others; consequently

you must not pay too much attention to them. It is a good maxim never to notice people's opinions of others unless they look unhappy when expressing them. Our old friend, Sidi Maklouf, puts it well in one of his sayings: "Heed no man's tongue, little son of mine, neither shrink from Arab's gaze. Is not thy tongue as good as his, are not thine eyes as fair, and if his tongue be steeped in malice or his eyes hardened by the look of hate, how much more beautiful is thy tongue, how much more beautiful thine eyes?" It is good to remember that harsh expressions of other people are usually delivered by those who do not even know the objects of their dislike, and have never held a minute's conversation with them.

In this country people have very bad memories, and a public character who starts by being much disliked often finishes by becoming an institution. Similarly the French never forgave Napoleon for being a Corsican, but he became an institution before he was forty. Consistency does this; it cannot be achieved by changing opinions with every government. Vicars of Bray may be national figures, but never national institutions. Do you see the difference, or, rather, do you feel it? All contact between individuals is a matter of giving and taking, and no one receives so much as he who gives first. To greet new acquaintances with projected sympathy is a sure way to be loved in this world, if you can only get over your too critical nature. A sensitive person is so finely tuned to the atmosphere of others that he is generally extreme in his likes and dislikes. He meets, and either sparks off his acquaintance or fits in and makes contact. Possibly people are positive or negative characters, and follow the electrical maxim of like poles repelling. This idea contradicts the saying: "Like attracts like": similar

natures rarely attract one another, and then, I feel, only with people of weak personality. You must always differentiate between this psychic attraction or repulsion and momentary dislike due to some physical attribute, or to a chance remark that irritates. Those who repel momentarily often repay further acquaintance. It is entirely a waste of time to have anything to do with those to whom you feel anti-sympathetic, and contact is bad for both parties. To be a good listener, a sympathetic hearer, to be one who is always the same in his reactions to the other person, is a sure passport to affection and esteem. You will find, if you are versatile, that the range of your friends will be very varied; therefore you must never expect two of your friends to like each other. You may be a good bar-fly and yet a perfect companion for an operatic performance; a good travelling companion and yet good bedside company; a bright and cheerful friend or a quiet and serious one. All these to different friends; and your reactions will be quite automatic. There will be no need to inquire of yourself how you are going to treat So-and-so: you will merely fit in exactly to the atmosphere required. This is a valuable quality, only possessed by highly tuned natures. Never be afraid of giving too much of yourself to another. If you are not received, your output of sympathy can return; if it is gathered up, it will strengthen the friendship to mutual advantage. If you meet someone to whom you feel sympathetic, never hesitate to start a conversation; though in England you will find this more difficult than elsewhere, except among the poor. You can always give something of yourself that may gladden or help, and you can generally learn something that will be of use, not the least being a capacity to talk easily and pleasantly to all types

and conditions of people. On the other hand, never talk to the feminine *bourgeoise* in a train; she will either be frightened or "fresh," and her hand has a strange affinity with the communication cord which is difficult for her to resist if you start asking questions of her. I have met many people, destined to become good friends, in railway carriages or on steamships, but I am very careful to consider, first, whether the attraction is largely due to the actual environment or not. So often the holiday friend abroad becomes a different person at home, and the disillusion is unpleasant.

It is difficult to be popular if you hold views strongly that are not, at the moment, either orthodox or generally accepted; whatever you do comes in for misrepresentation and abuse, and inconceivable wickednesses are attributed to you. With orthodox views, however, much will be forgiven you. When the unorthodox is put in jail it "serves him right"; when the orthodox receive the same treatment it's "damned bad luck." If this happens, being unorthodox, wait until your views become accepted; you are then on your way to becoming an institution. Your grandfather once said to me: "When the electors start putting their tongues out at you, you know you are winning." The same applies to concentrated public abuse. The projected tongue is the personal reaction to an unassailable position. If your conscience is clear you have nothing to fear. . . . No, that was not by Mrs. Hemans.

One of the lost arts to-day is that of conversation, and the spice of conversation is argument. It takes a deal of skill to be a good arguer, for control of temper and voice, a knowledge of when to stop, and a perfect timing for the introduction of humour, are all needed. Never argue with

a fool, and never argue with a woman; but do not make the mistake of thinking they are synonymous. A fool wastes your time—it could be better occupied in attaining knowledge, which he is incapable of doing in conversation. A feminine mind—and it can be found in men, of course—is incapable of argument, for it starts from prejudice and acknowledges no weakness. You can lead it right up to the point where the answer must be “yes” or “no,” but you will have no opportunity of hearing this, for, without the slightest reference to the argument, another train of “thought” will be started which, in turn, will be left high and dry when its course is run. Your grandmother is the perfect instance of that type of mind. She will begin with a conclusion, drag in twenty-five premisses from all over the show, produce an extra and contrary conclusion, and then imagine she has proved the first one. It is very interesting to watch, and there is no answer to it, for she has already answered, disproved and contradicted her own conclusion before she is half-way through. She catches you out, though, for she gives you two conclusions to choose from. This kind of argument is also used: “Divorce is a bad thing. The object of life is happiness, and happiness can only be achieved by love. Love is self-sacrifice. Therefore two married people should never be divorced.” “Even,” you ask, “if they do not love each other?” “I think it’s going to rain,” is the reply. And there you are. You can work out the illogicalities for yourself, but an hour or two of this encourages a sensation of light-headedness. The feminine mind holds strongly that any string of statements will do to prove a prejudicial conclusion, and the only reason it essays the proving is to satisfy the strange masculine desire for evidence before conviction. Although I am a

strong advocate of the feminine mind in helping the affairs of state, God help the wretched prisoner who comes before a feminine jury. Never argue from conviction. That is military argument, and should be left to old Generals in older clubs. The purpose of argument is to reach conviction. If you are convinced, you can only state or assert with honesty.

Never allow yourself to dislike people: let your attitude towards those who are unsympathetic be entirely negative. Hate is a powerful weapon, and acts psychically in a very detrimental way. Do not entertain the possibility of being anyone's enemy. It is only an acknowledgment of fear, and I should not like to think that old Mr. Fear had at last been cunning enough to creep into you after all these years, unsuspected.

Beware of offending women. They are even more dangerous as enemies than as friends, and in both cases are far more dangerous than men. A feminine nature will stoop to any extreme to gain its ends, even to the betraying of friends. The excuse is generally "love," but most people call it "jealousy." The reason women have come to consider themselves the superior sex is because they believe the stuff written about them by sentimental, elderly newspaper-men with a strange habit of thinking highly of women the moment they get away from their wives. Besides this, when newspaper-men get old they become sentimental about their mothers and their old homes. This, perhaps, is the little revenge a humorous God takes for over-eagerness in their youth to leave the parental roof (generally in Scotland) at the earliest possible moment. It is a little piece of humbug dear to their hearts, and rather equivalent to eating a chocolate cream. There is no superior sex; only



superior qualities in both sexes, which *en masse* produce individual superiority.

There is no training-ground like politics for getting to know human beings. You will find in that *milieu* devotion, sacrifice and friendship side by side with back-biting, betrayal and flattery. You will be up one minute and down the next: a Member of Parliament with a salary for two years, then out of work and penniless. You will be admired for the position you hold, irrespective of how you got it or what principles you conveniently threw overboard in the process: but no one will pay tribute to consistency or sincerity, for the first is looked upon as refusing to take advantage of preferment, and the second is invariably questioned. But of all qualities a man may possess, the rarest he will find in others is gratitude. Lend a man five pounds and he is your sworn enemy for life: render him a service and he will be the first to deny you in adversity. These things are sent to test us; and when you meet them and feel slightly bitter about them, never let that bitterness be expressed in any way, or you will have shown that your generosity was with a purpose, your service rendered in the hope of reward.

A strange phenomenon in politics is the way you can tell a man's political complexion by his physical propensities. This is only believable if you accept the idea that extremes of political thought are caused by excess or lack of certain glandular secretions. It is almost impossible to find a fat, red-faced, clean-shaven man who is not a Tory, and equally difficult to find a tall, thin, bespectacled, bearded man who is not a Liberal. Labour people are more difficult to place, but in the two instances I have given you have only to think of the number of butchers who fit the first

description and grocers who fit the second. Die-hard teetotallers are nearly all short-sighted; sex repression produces exponents and upholders of unpopular crusades. Why is this? It has its exceptions, of course, but, from much study, I have found these facts generally true.

In spite of the multitude of people, the types into which the overwhelming majority fit are not numerous. Once you have discovered the type into which an acquaintance falls, you ought to have no difficulty in knowing his failings and advantages by your knowledge of someone else of similar type. The loud-voiced, irritating kind should be tackled from the other point of view, and your own quiet and gentle treatment will discover how much the loud voice has to hide of its sensitive self. The thick-skinned type is all right on his own. The less he has to do with others the more comfortable for everyone else. The gentle, shrinking man is generally a hard worker, with strange passions roused to surprising heights where cases of cruelty or injustice come to his knowledge.

The snob type is frequently pompous and generally untravelled, except on conducted tours. If a man, his greatest material ambition is probably to be a Justice of the Peace, and his greatest "spiritual" ambition to have his name carved on a brick or foundation-stone of the local chapel. If he can also have his name on a street of a new housing scheme, his cup is full to overflowing. He must be avoided at all costs, and the only use for such a creature is to amuse the crowd in the saloon bar by having his leg skilfully pulled.

Women who are cats must be contradicted and opposed. Every time you can kill an unkind remark, scandalous rumour or invented lie, do so at once, with the strongest

possible denial, for these things spread like an obnoxious gas, and wither much that is good before you are aware of it. The ineffective little painted doll can be helped by private ridicule; but even that has surprisingly little effect. If the ridicule be public it may succeed, but at great pain to the object. Never imagine that heredity produces all the vices and none of the virtues in children, for bad does not breed bad so easily as environment does. Some of the best people in the world have had the worst type of parents, and *vice versa*.

In meeting people for the first time you may have an overwhelming sense of having met them before and known them. If your reaction is one of pleasure, cultivate them; if not, avoid them, for such people we have met before, either in the spirit world or here on this earth in a former incarnation. If the same feeling comes about houses or places, these you have visited, either in spirit or in a former incarnation. I can hear you saying: "But that is no proof. You state this, but where is the proof?" I know, I know. I am stating these things about the spirit world because I have been told of them by an agency that was not human, and I believe; that is all there is to it, for want of a better explanation. Give me licence, at any rate, to make some assertions. Look at the nonsense economists and doctors talk, which is constantly being corrected or denied. I think, however, that will be the last of this kind of assertion; so we will go on to a theory of mine which you can follow or not in reading people's faces.

Take a photograph of anyone you like—a full-face one—and cover up half of it with a sheet of paper down the centre of the nose, leaving only half the face visible. Now, make your mind a blank and concentrate on the visible eye. After

a few seconds that eye will tell you a great deal. When it can tell you no more, read the other one in the same way. The impression will be entirely different, and may even contradict that of its fellow. Now write what you have seen in both, and compare, and you ought to know a great deal about the subject of the photograph. Oscar Wilde once said—and I do not think it has ever been quoted before—that “a man’s face is his autobiography, and a woman’s her work of fiction,” but the faces of both sexes reveal equally their chief characteristics. Look at the photograph with both its eyes uncovered, and some qualities sink into oblivion, even qualities that seemed strong when you concentrated on only the one eye. Take the photographs of any of our leading politicians, and you will learn surprising things: you will even learn why Mr. MacDonald was bound to take the course he did in 1931, and why Mr. Snowden did too, and you will see that both acted for entirely different reasons, which is surprising. No, I am not going to tell you; you shall try the experiment for yourself.

Faces are fascinating studies, and a knowledge of them is of the greatest value, especially for impulsive people. When we talk of someone “radiating charm” we mean more than we say. We mean that a person attracts you by goodness and kindness. When we feel that there is a “repellent” effect, we mean that something unpleasant is a dominant characteristic in the object of our repulsion. There are other ways of reading faces than by looking at a photograph, for a photograph can accentuate or minimize qualities according to the atmosphere that surrounded the subject during the process of photography. Snapshots and press photographs are bad, in this respect, to judge from. The best way is to make your mind a blank and concentrate

on the individual. In so doing you will be sending out sub-conscious psychic rays that will be sub-consciously repelled or attracted, and this will indicate when you are on the right track. A railway train is an admirable place for practice, but be careful not to let your interest develop into a stare, or you might receive one of those awful "Haven't we met before?" questions, which is only one worse than being greeted effusively by a total stranger. A study of faces keeps us well balanced in our judgments of people, for we soon begin to realize how much good there is in everyone. That, coupled with the knowledge that most unpleasantness is defence—the fear of being hurt—should make you a sympathetic creature whose presence in the world is justified by the help you can render others.

Always remember the sanctity of the Soul of man. Never, never forget Its holiness and the reverence that is due to It, and every time you see someone ugly, deformed, blind, arrested, persecuted or despised, say: "There, but for the grace of God, go I." This will prevent you from being inconsiderate. Finally, son, beware lest this knowledge make you superior in your dealings towards others. Sidi Maklouf—of whom I hope you are never tired—says on this subject: "Be not like Mohammed ben el Arbi who was Bash-Agha, and would go into the market and declare it to the buyers, but go thy way with Allah in thine eyes, and Arabs will say: 'There goes the Bash-Agha!'"

## CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

Of conversation—Of a walk—Of a Liberian coffee tree—  
Architecture—Old charters—Of teas—Clouds—A nice little  
story of the moon—Of insects.

I THINK we will go on a “ ’sploration ” now and talk of, and to, the cabbages and kings we meet with on our way. And I really mean talk : revive for our own delight the lost art of conversation. We will take a walk from home due east, up the Chilterns and through the woods, and it shall be the month of May and a very fine day at that, with a clear blue sky and a few fat, comfortable clouds sailing idly by. Overhead, birds are singing, and at our feet even the cow-parsley is smelling sweeter than it has ever done, just because you and I are passing by. You will be in a good mood to-day, and your mind shall flutter about exactly like a butterfly. So the scene is set, and we have sandwiches in our pockets, and stout ash-plants in our hands. Father and son it shall be, of the very newest type. Not this sort of thing :

FATHER : You notice how that wise and graceful mother-bird is giving sustenance to its offspring, child. See with what maternal care she thrusts her beak into the tender little throat.

SON : Yes, dear papa.

FATHER : Surely, now, there is a moral lesson of infinite worth, for you to retain in your memory till such time as

you can impart your lesson to other and more recalcitrant children, with whom you might come in contact during your daily round.

SON: Oh, indeed, yes, papa.

But this sort of thing:

SON: Not a bad day, is it?

FATHER: No.

SON: It ought to do us some good.

FATHER: Possibly.

SON: Look here, if you're going to talk like that all the time we might as well go home.

FATHER: I'm sorry. I was thinking of something else.

SON: Well, think of me for a change.

FATHER: I was thinking of you.

SON: What's wrong now?

FATHER: Nothing is wrong. Everything is so right that I expect something wrong to happen any minute. Do you ever feel like that?

SON: No, can't say I do. You can expound, if you like.

FATHER: Thank you. I don't know that there is anything to expound; it's just a feeling one is apt to get, when one is happy, that it can't last.

SON: You should never analyse happiness. The moment you start to do that the word loses its meaning.

FATHER: You're getting nearly as dogmatic as your father.

SON: Oh, I only say things and they're done with. You write them down. That's much worse.

FATHER (After pondering for some time, happily finds something to divert the conversation): Is that oats or barley growing in that field?

SON: I don't know. Which is it?

FATHER: Look and see.

SON: I am looking, but I can't tell the difference.

FATHER: Pull up the roots and look.

SON (Does so, and then with a look of amazement):  
Oats.

FATHER: You've lived in the country all these years and behave like a townsman.

SON (Sarcastically): Did you know everything before you were twenty-one?

FATHER (With consummate confidence): Yes.

SON: I suppose you hardly think it worth while living now. (This in an icy cold voice.)

FATHER (Very sweetly): But most of it was wrong.

SON: Which did you teach me?

FATHER: Both.

SON: That seems to me a waste of time.

FATHER: It allowed you the initiative to choose.

SON: *Ssh.*

FATHER: What. . . ?

SON: We are entering a wood.

So the two tread very softly, for they know woods are sacred places and do not like noise. Their feet make scarcely any sound, for it is a beech wood, and beeches always insist on the same kind of carpet to stand on. Green moss is everywhere, and from this covering the bare trunks rise grey and very silent. Above, the leaves have changed their shrill green for a darker shade. A squirrel's drey sits securely on a high fork, safe from the gentle swaying that a soft breeze can cause in the smaller branches. The birds have gone afield, and there is peace everywhere except among the fallen beech-leaves of yellow ochre, under whose shelter countless insects wander in search of friends. Here



and there an ant hurries on his daily toil. Father follows one till he reaches its home, and there, lying face down on the earth, he watches the goings-on of these most fascinating insects. Their labours remind him of a story.

FATHER: These insects have brains as well as instinct.

SON: I don't believe you.

FATHER: Want proof?

SON: Yes.

FATHER: In Washington, some years ago, there was a Liberian coffee tree.

SON: It wouldn't grow there.

FATHER: It was in a greenhouse.

SON: Umph.

FATHER: Under the leaves of this tree there are nectar-secreting glands. These the ants discovered. They fed there for weeks, till the cleverest ant in the world worked out what an excellent place a gland would be to place a mealie bug in. It would then grow big, feed on the nectar, and not be like "caviare to the general"! But, unfortunately, the gland was not big enough to take a mealie bug, so what do you think the ants did?

SON: Go on with the story.

FATHER: They gnawed the edges of the gland until it was big enough to put the bug in, and after they had reared a large family of nectar-filled bugs, they ate them.

SON: That's not intelligence. That's greed.

Lunch-time is calling, and a public-house in the distance is soon reached. Bread and cheese, pickles and beer, and our sandwiches—what could be better? There is no pretence of anything more varied. This reminds Father.

FATHER: I once was forced to have lunch in a townlet in England at one of those establishments that are stupidly

called "hotels." I was shown into a dilapidated dining-room and handed a dilapidated menu. . . .

SON: By a dilapidated waiter.

FATHER: I said to him: "What have you for lunch?" He looked at me sadly and said: "Soup." "What kind of soup?" "Just soup, sir," he almost sighed. "Anything else?" "There's fish." (He is almost sobbing now.) "What kind of fish?" "Just fish, sir."

SON: Did you cry?

FATHER: Nearly.

They eat their meal on a bench outside the "pub," and Son takes out a murderous-looking clasp-knife to cut his bread with. The beer is good, the pickles are best. Father is soon replete. Son is not. He asks for more. After the meal, Father crosses the road and, without more ado, lies down under a chestnut tree and goes to sleep. An hour later Father is awakened by his son.

SON: Are you going to stay there all day?

FATHER: Sorry.

SON: It's a bit dull waiting for you to come back to life.

FATHER: You could have slept too.

SON: I'm not tired.

FATHER: Very well. Come on.

He rises to his feet and the two set off together. Son is striding rapidly. Father is regretting his sleep. The asphalt road is tiring to their boots, and soon they enter the fields and walk softly past the hedges, looking for birds' nests. Hedge-sparrows' and finches' nests, starlings' and tits'. In a quarter of a mile they find seven or eight. Beyond these fields hides a small town, and through this lies their way. As they come to the outskirts they pass rows of new houses, and this is too much for both of them.

FATHER: Can it cost so much more to erect a beautiful house than a hideous one?

SON: They don't want beautiful houses.

FATHER: They don't have a chance of having them. The architects are machines even in this country.

SON: They wouldn't have a beautiful one if you drew one for them.

FATHER: And those chimneys. My God! Look at the proportions.

SON: Why have chimneys when they can have steam heat?

FATHER: They can't have that, it's too expensive. Besides, it's a new idea.

SON: Look at the names! "The Cedars" . . . why, that's a fir tree.

FATHER: It's near enough.

SON: "Poonah."

FATHER: That must be an old soldier.

And so on, through a list of incredible names that make one resolve to have a number on one's own house at all costs.

They cross a railway bridge and stand for a minute or two watching the trains beneath them. They both would like to ride in front of an engine, or at any rate in an observation car. But they are few and far between in England. No club cars here, or heated corridors, or radio to while away the time. They see a hand-worked trolley being trundled down the line. They would like to manœuvre one of those. On they go, and before them lies a steep hill. Son walks bravely ahead: Father walks up backwards, for it is less strain. At the top of the hill is a glorious view over the river valley and away to the south.

They discuss the best vista to choose for a landscape, and bend down and make frames of their hands. And they disagree, and argue, and laugh. They move down the farther slope and come to a field of cow-parsley. Out comes the murderous clasp-knife again, and stalks of cow-parsley are turned into flutes that make raucous noises. Son decides to make a Pan-pipe and does so. Father feels too old to play Pan, so he sits and watches his son. Tired of the game, the two move on, talking of this and that and feeling very happy indeed. Suddenly Son looks extremely bored.

SON: We have talked of "cabbages and kings" enough.

FATHER: Is there nothing left?

SON: Yes.

FATHER: What?

SON: Sealing-wax to start with.

FATHER: All right. We will start by a beautiful recitation of a very old charter that has a strong bearing on sealing-wax, which, in those days, was bitten and not stamped with a ring. It is called "Concessum ad Paulum Roydon."

I, William, King, the thurd yere of my reign,  
Give to thee, Paulyn Roydon, Hope and Hoptowne,  
With all the bounds both up and downe,  
From heaven to yerthe, from yerthe to hel,  
For thee and thyn, therinne to dwel,  
As truly as this King-right is myn,  
For a cross bowe and a harrow,  
When I sal cum to hunt on Yarrow;  
And in token that this thing is soothe,  
I byte the whyt wax with my wang toothe  
Before Meg, Maude and Margery,  
And my third son Henry.

SON: You didn't remember all that. You put it in afterwards.

FATHER (Not paying the slightest attention): Observe how correct the town-bred *petite bourgeoisie* are when they pronounce "one" as "wan." Far more correct than we.

SON (Also paying no attention): There is an older charter than that. One given to Beverley in Yorkshire in 941 by King Athelstone.

Al free mak I thee,  
As heart can wish, or een can see.

(Subtly) Observe how Scots the Danish king was.

FATHER: You made that up.

SON: Don't be jealous.

The afternoon is well on its way to eventide, and the claims of the younger call for tea. The two pass through a little village, and outside a cottage see a notice that fills them with disgust.

FATHER: "Dainty teas."

SON: How ghastly!

FATHER: What is a "dainty tea"?

SON: Concentrated edible *bourgeois* morality.

And it is. "Dainty," indeed! . . . Any word but "dainty." They cannot eat under that sign. They go on. Near a main road they see another cottage where the sign "Teas" bids fair to fulfil their needs. They order tea and anything there is to eat for the son, and milk for the father, and the buxom cottager smiles upon Son, as he eats, as if he had fasted for a week.

B. C.: Enjoys his food?

FATHER: He is growing.

SON: I know a good rock-cake when I see one.

FATHER: That's not intelligence. That's greed.

SON: Where did you learn to make such good cakes?

B. C.: In the war. I was a W.A.A.C.

SON: A W.A.A.C.?

B. C.: You wouldn't know what that means. We were young girls then, just grown up, and we served the soldiers and did the cooking and one thing and another.

FATHER: Did you get abroad?

B. C.: Yes. Those were grand days.

SON: That's not what he says.

FATHER: They were grand days.

SON: Why, you said . . .

A look from Father stops further talk, and he receives in reply one of those looks of withering contempt that only boys of sixteen can give their elders when they think they have been cheated. Tea finished, they start off again. The inevitable question is not long in coming.

SON: Why were they grand then? And if they were grand why are you a pacifist?

FATHER: See chapter nine.

SON: But the book isn't written yet.

FATHER: That's all you know.

SON: Anyway, I don't care.

FATHER: I think I'm the most aggravating parent that ever lived.

SON: I've thought that for a long time.

FATHER: I think you're the most aggravating son that ever lived.

SON: Nerfs.

FATHER: I am quite shocked.

SON: Liar!

FATHER: It is just as well this is only a made-up conversation, or people will think you are a horrible boy.

SON: I don't care what people think who don't know me, and . . .

FATHER: Hurray! Don't bother to finish the sentence. It is all right as it stands.

And they walk on and on, up hill and down dale, and watch clouds gathering for evensong. Great shapes come tumbling out of nothing and show likenesses to dragons or ogres' faces. As the sun walks slowly downhill, lakes form themselves between banks that are aflame, and the struggle lasts such a short time before the fire consumes the blue water. Now the sky shows patches of most lovely green, and below that a bank of indigo draws a hard, straight line above a band of gleaming gold. A mountain of fleecy grey cloud, fringed with pink, seems inaccessible to all, but, see, there comes a dragon from the east with a flaming tongue and smoking nostrils. He passes through the mountain, consuming it like cake. It is gone, and the weight of the mountain in his stomach has blown the dragon to smithereens.

SON: Does a sunset make you happy or sad?

FATHER: Sad.

SON: Same here.

FATHER: Why?

SON: You know.

And he does. They descend to the river and see the weeping willows brushing the smoothness from the water. The may is still out, and reflects itself in white patches on a darkening surface. Overhead the snipe are zum-zumming as they turn on the wing in their chase after insects, and a sedge-warbler by the reeds sings his farewell to another day. Darker and darker grows the sky, and the bands of gold and flame grow narrower and narrower. A

soft breeze begins to rise, and a wild-duck, suddenly startled, beats the water as it cranes its neck forward preparatory to flight. The moon, that has long been watching, shines forth brighter as the surrounding sky grows dark, and Father breaks the silence that these sounds and sights have conjured between the two humans.

FATHER: I will tell you a story of the moon.

SON: I expect I have heard it.

FATHER: You have not. Anyway, I shall tell it aloud to myself.

SON: Go ahead.

FATHER: Once upon a time, in the heart of the Congo, the people were visited by an eclipse of the sun. They were very put out about this, and deliberated for a long time as to what was best to be done. At length it was agreed that a message be sent to the moon asking her if she would be good enough to shine during the day as well, for something had happened to the sun. The next business was to decide who should carry the message, and this they found difficult, for the lion was sure to kill something on the way, and then go to sleep and forget what he had to do. The hyena's voice made him quite impossible for a diplomatic journey. The elephant could not speak properly because his nose got in the way of his mouth. The crocodile was always bursting into tears. The buffalo could not see the way because he had hair over his eyes, and the giraffe would make the moon laugh so much that she could not hear the request. It was indeed very difficult to find a really suitable messenger. At last, up spoke the flea. "It seems to me," he said, "that for a job like this you want someone small. Someone who will neither waste his time killing nor run the risk of being killed." "Well spoken," said



## CHAPTER NINETEEN

Walt Whitmanesque—Of riches—Lonely people—Growing very old—Humour—Middle-class morality—Of liberty—Of Valhalla.

PONDER on birth, growth and decay, son, and receive comfort from contemplation of these matters. We are so very little, so exceedingly short-lived. Watch the gnat who lives for a day; a day that is probably three score years and ten in his own experience. Note the speed at which Time marches as you grow older. We were born, we grow, we procreate, we die. The male animal—fighting and procreating with extreme zeal—then losing interest. Watch the couples going out for their evening walk, and see the difference on their return. The female animal drawing from the male strength and power—killing the male when she has no further use for him. And this cycle taking place amid the elements. The great elements of Earth, Air, Fire and Water. Earth, the Mother; Air, the Father; Fire, the Cleanser; Water, the Comforter. The eternal fight of Heat and Cold. The contradictions of things. The kiss after the blow, the stab after the handshake. The dock and the stinging nettle side by side. The iron-stone and the coal wedded in the Earth; taken forth and changed by Fire and Air and tempered in Water.

No, son, this is no Walt Whitman, but a contemplation

of the wonder of things, perhaps, in his style. Have you ever tried shouting the poems of this singer of camaraderie in a wood when the wind is blowing through it? I should like to have known him, as I would have William Morris. I once asked Ben Tillett the difference between Morris and Edward Carpenter. I remember his words: "Morris was a great big lovable whirlwind, and Carpenter like a gentle breeze through a wood, with the setting sun behind it." I liked that.

Ponder on the futility of possessions and the acquisition of material riches. See the energy, the deceit, the blindness in the pursuit of this wealth by men. They will attribute their worldly means to "the early bird that catches the worm." This may be so, but do not forget it is the early worm that is caught. Remember the nineteenth-century dictum on the subject of money? "A certain ten per cent. will ensure its capital employment anywhere; twenty per cent. will produce eagerness; fifty per cent. positive audacity; a hundred per cent. will make it ready to trample on all human laws; three hundred per cent. and there is not a crime at which it will scruple, nor a risk it will not run, even to the chance of its owner being hanged."

And all for what? For the adulation of fools; for the wearing of gew-gaws; for the acquisition of toys we are tired of in a few weeks; for the cringing servitude of knaves; for the consumption of rich foodstuffs; for the drinking of that much over-rated liquor, champagne; for the piling up of capital to be used in the same way by one's descendants; for the purchase of titles of nobility; for the encouragement of stinginess and vanity. All this and more. Or else for the use of others, for the easing of material suffering in others, for the acquisition of knowledge, for the advance-

ment of art, for the building of beautiful things to look upon, for the protection of defenceless animals. Yes, either. And it is a test that is cruel, for failure in that means suffering to others.

If riches happen to come your way, and I am not there to help, remember these things and never forget your stewardship. You will probably go through financial ups and downs for some time till you have found permanency. One year a fixed salary, the next working like a black to earn half the previous year's amount. But do not let this depress you, for it will be your destiny, and by your behaviour then you will be tested. Never ask for material help of anyone, rather take a staff and the open road, carrying your worldly possessions on your back and God in your heart.

I want you always to be sympathetic towards lonely people; towards those who have outlived their friends, or to whom every new year is a greater struggle than the last. Women who have lost their men, and men who have lost their women. Women who have served alone, into whose life a partner's help has not come. Men who still labour on, disillusioned and empty-hearted. And age with its illnesses and physical suffering, asking nothing but to be left alone if it cannot be loved. And those who have built fairy-castles in their hearts, and seen them smashed and gutted by those they love. Sidi Maklouf again: "Respect old men and little children when thou art grown, my son. The one will speak well of thee to Mohammed when they shortly leave this life. The others will respect thee when thou art old, so that thou canst speak well of them, which is much pleasure to thee." This respect does not instil agreement with the views of age or subservience to their

every command; it is more a reverence to that which, at either end of life, is nearer the eternal.

You will find much jealousy of youth in this country from the aged, and your very human father, even though not old, does sometimes look with envy at the happy holidays of young men and maidens, for he never experienced that period of life before the roses of youth begin to wither. His youth was cut short, as you are aware. Appreciate the happiness of others. When you cease to do that, you will know that your liver is out of order, and you will be a good boy and eat fruit till you are better. Play with children; keep in touch with the young; run abreast with modern thought and aspirations; encourage expressions of opinion in others. Be afraid of no one's tongue, and realize that the use of the fist is but a refusal to use intelligence.

When people grow old, they sometimes feel it advisable to take out an insurance policy against hell-fire. They become religious and do amazing things; but the most amazing thing of all is the way in which they cling to life, even though it can give them nothing. That Christians should be afraid to die proves that their faith is not very deeply held, for an offered Paradise for an actual decay seems to me a very profitable exchange.

When I was very young I prayed to be grown-up, and I never remember a day in which I wanted to be younger by a single hour. Many people cling to their youth, and dread the advent of age. The loss of hair becomes a tragedy, the enlargement of the stomach's flesh an infliction from the devil, and the loss of wind appears as the becalming of a racing yacht to them. And why? Because they have never looked ahead; they have lived entirely for the present; they are afraid that they will be left behind.

But it is no tragedy—it is development, it is nearing the fulfilment of one's earthly span. It should be welcomed and not dreaded. If the mind be versatile, it can still be useful, and if the gulf between the generations has not been widened by war or hatreds, association with youth will help that mind to keep young.

You have associated much with people older than yourself; that will stand you in good stead later in life, but it must not make you priggish, for he is a poor gardener who only likes the full rose. There is no relative age in the Soul, and you should find friends among all ages. You can be of much comfort to the old by your sympathy and gentleness, as you can to the young by your kindness and strength of purpose. If it is your fate to be beloved, take care it does not make you selfish. If you are fated to be misunderstood, take care it does not make you hard. Give of yourself, and you cannot fail to be loved, and though you may be treated as a mat for all to walk upon, your presence will have eased their footsteps, and in so much will you have served.

Humour is the yeast of life. Cling to it. It is a faithful friend, but be careful it does not overstep the bounds of friendship and colour all things in your life, or you will find yourself saying: "What is the good of anything? It is all too silly"; and your actions will dissolve in a sea of laughter. Many a good man has had his purpose in life diverted by too great a sense of humour. Humour turns away wrath better than a soft answer. It is a tie that binds people of very different types to their mutual advantage. It is a begetter of friendship, a comforter in discomfort, and a killer of many vices. The delightful story of the golden goose, in which everyone who touched the toucher of the

goose could not draw his hand away, is a perfect instance of humour, and we do not wonder the princess laughed for the first time in her life.

Of all professions that attract the humourless, surely the Law takes first place. I have known many lawyers with a great sense of humour, but far more who are so entirely devoid of it that their own seriousness has been even less humourless than their remarks. Perhaps gossip-writers in newspapers (if they form a profession) take a deal of beating in this respect; otherwise, how they can write what they do of Royalty and the "great and good" is beyond my comprehension. They say, however, it is done with the tongue in the cheek. I only wish the readers could perceive this: it would revive their faith in humanity.

Do you ever wake up in the morning and feel how funny everything is? I know days when I can be filled with the greatest joy to see a man in a bowler hat riding a motor-bicycle. I can watch from the pavement the earnest English on top of an uncovered omnibus jolt their heads forward in unison as the vehicle stops, and jolt them backwards as it starts, and see much humour in it. I can smile with pleasure at the thought of pompous politicians divested entirely of clothing, and revel in the sight of aged men wearing fifty-year-old rowing caps on considerably enlarged heads. A straw hat on a long-haired man fills me with mirth, and elderly boy scouts with unhappy knees always make me feel frivolous. I can laugh with "Beachcomber" and yawn at the jokes in *Punch*. I am amused by music-halls and bored by revues. I have a low taste in bar-fly stories and revel in witty repartee. I cannot define humour, yet I always laugh at someone slipping on a banana skin, which is often cruel. Practical joking does not always

appeal, but I should have enjoyed immensely the activity of the man who dug up Piccadilly and left his excavations at lunch-time never to return. Of all this man's escapades, the measuring of Devonshire House was surely the best. He arrived outside the gates one day with a tape-measure, and spent sufficient time measuring bricks to attract the usual idle crowd. He then walked round the corner of the wall into Berkeley Street, and, finding someone apparently doing nothing, asked him to hold one end of the tape. Next he unwound the tape, turned the corner and walked the length of the front gates and wall till he reached Stratton Street, round the corner of which he found another idler willing to hold the end of the tape. He then crossed the street, mixed with the crowd and waited. Minutes passed, and then, gradually, boredom settling upon the holders of the tape, the two moved gingerly along the side of the wall, still holding their tape, and peered nervously round the corner at each other. The expressions on their faces must have been joyous to watch.

I have always loved the eighteenth-century story of the Englishman at Bath who was so nettled at the new and snobbish fashion of putting P.P.C. on calling cards, that he left cards on all his friends with D.I.O. inscribed thereon. On being asked what the initials signified, he told his interrogator it stood for "Damme, I'm off," which he insisted was more English than "*Pour prendre congé*." It is interesting to recall that the common form at the present day among card-leavers was once considered vain conceit.

Eschew middle-class morality, for it is the perfection of the commonplace, the acme of self-satisfaction, the crown of flatulent ignorance. From this has come the humbug and hypocrisy, the "front-room" manners, the intolerance

and bigotry of our people. It is the aim of the working man, the paradise of the *petit bourgeois*, the Ritz of the trade union leader. From this comes the bespectacled fanatic with the tannin-lined liver, who tells us what we must and must not drink, while he himself is the walking proof of the awful effects of that drug we know as tea. It is the blind seeking to cure evil results without heeding their evil causes. They can own slum property at the same time that they denounce the very products of these same conditions. To them outward signs are everything. They cannot understand unless they can see. A top hat to them is more than a tender heart; a gold "albert" more than knowledge. They sway in their allegiances this way and that, and are only moved to excitement by photographs of royalty in their newspapers, or pictures of a good murder trial. To them, art is a closed book, religion a custom, and marriage a duty, and the more they hate their wives and families, the more they cling to them for convention's sake, while the women stay with their husbands because they cannot face existence alone so late in life. The height of their cultural ambition is to sit in a foreign country and drink tea. They express in English, meanwhile, their loud disapproval of everything in sight. They produce the worst mothers-in-law in England and the best bread and butter; the worst clothes and the best back-gardens; the worst accents and the best clerical skill. They would rather feed an aspidistra than water a rose, and rather live in Blackpool than Capri. They are more irritating than usual when they write letters to the papers praising themselves.

Strange products come from the *petite bourgeoisie*, difficult to understand. They work exceedingly hard during the week, and on Saturdays they leap on bicycles



and ride for miles and miles till they are completely worn out. On Sundays they bicycle all the way back, and on Monday morning are physical wrecks. They have large Adam's apples, and are mostly short-sighted, but whether this is due to bicycling or drinking tea, I am not prepared to state. Of course, joking apart, these physical propensities are not the result but the cause. We know that, but they do not.

They have no understanding of liberty or tolerance, and they love to write "esquire" after their names, although they have not the faintest idea what it means. They do not matter much, for if you are rich they will do what you tell them, and if you are poor they will not talk to you. They are affectionate and sentimental, but do not like to be told so.

And liberty . . . cherish this, for it is very sacred. Without it, the Soul is veiled more heavily. It is caged and reviled by those very people who enjoy it most. By liberty I mean freedom to follow your own conscience in any form of expression, provided that in so doing you do not interfere with the corresponding freedom of another. This will not always be easy to follow out, but it is the ideal, and if you deny liberty to others contrary to this ideal, you have no right to liberty yourself. For the great are always falling down and the poor rising up, and places are changed more frequently than at the "rising of the moon." Remember the heterodoxy of to-day is the orthodoxy of to-morrow, and your patience need not be of Job's excessiveness before you are able to see marked changes in men's ways and feelings. Mrs. Pankhurst was one of the luckiest people who ever lived, for in her own lifetime she saw the realization of that for which she had sacrificed so much.

We shall not all be so lucky, but we realize, in recalling her life to mind, that apparently impossible hopes are capable of realization.

We are nearing the end of our message, son, and there are but a few more things I would say; for every hour that I write to you is an hour nearer the time when my sentimental nature, still living in the memories of my early manhood, will realize its urge to fly . . .

Across the coloured beauties of the land,  
And the brightness of that spirit world  
Where peace and quietness their long vigils keep.  
I rest, my sabre sheathed, my banner furled,  
In some Valhalla where the soldiers sleep.

For they were my comrades when I caught the first glimmerings of destiny, and my body only lives for the day, however many days my hopes may live for.

## CHAPTER TWENTY

Of history—Economics—Why we are in a mess—Oh, a lot of reasons.

I WANT to tell you something of how the mess we are in originated, and I cannot do better than deal with the materialist side first. You will be able to see for yourself how that side affects the spirit; and that is the important thing.

Let me start, therefore, by asserting that the sole object of industry is profit for the employer, and those who have entrusted him with invested capital.

Having made that assertion we can include all forms of commercialism, and we get this interesting supposition. The primary object of life in England is to make profit—not for the community but for the individual: not for forty-seven millions of people, but for the two and a half million income-tax payers only.

The primary aim of the vast bulk of the remainder is to make that profit with hand and brain for the two and a half million employers, directors and shareholders. Forty-four and a half millions working for two and a half millions. Not a pretty picture, nor the kind of existence that is likely to encourage the Christian qualities, or give hope to mankind of a more spiritual life capable of making "Thy Kingdom come, on earth as it is in heaven."

However, let us look back and see how this came about.

The immediate results of the invention of steam were the erection of factories, the building of slum dwellings, and the call of the disinherited land-workers of England to come into the new towns and to give the service of their bodies in exchange for a few shillings a week. These men and women therefore continued to work for the new masters till their bodies became too frail, when they were either kept by their relatives, lived half-starving on what they had managed to save, or gave themselves to the delicacies of the workhouse, and dug each other's graves in the pauper cemetery, eager for the only rest they had ever known.

This was the condition of industry at the time of Charles Dickens's youth, and the result was, of course, great wealth to the employers. This wealth was acknowledged as proof of the "prosperity" of Great Britain, and gave us the subtitles of "Workshop of the World," "Queen Victoria's Glorious Kingdom," "The Wealthiest Country Ever Known."

In 1844, in the middle of this "prosperity," a change was made in our system of banking, and the "Hungry Forties" followed.

The introduction of machinery inflicted innumerable hardships upon many sections of hand-workers, especially the weavers, of whom Karl Marx said: "The history of the world shows no more terrible spectacle than the gradual ruin, which lingered on for decades, but was finally sealed in 1838, of the English hand-weavers, many of whom, with their families, eked out an existence on twopence halfpenny a day. This was the effect of the factory system on the workers of competing trades."

Under this system that made England so "prosperous," we find that before the law of 1833 for the protection of

youthful workers,<sup>1</sup> children had to work night and day in shifts until they were entirely tired out, when another shift would take their place.

It wasn't till the Whigs introduced a bill in 1847 that a ten-hour day was introduced, and then it was only for children of thirteen to eighteen, and for women.

It is significant that before this law the value of British exports was 57·7 million pounds sterling, and that by 1852 the exports had risen to 78 millions, an increase of 35 per cent.

These conditions of industry continued throughout Queen Victoria's reign, but with tepid alleviation in the shape of reforms extorted from different governments by the fear of Labour, which was then beginning to organize itself.

The acquisition of new territories created a further demand for English goods, and in spite of Chartist riots, Owenism, the Indian Mutiny, the Christian Socialism of Maurice, Kingsley, Ludlow and Neale, industry increased, factories reared their ugly heads over the once beautiful countryside, and the newly crowded workers began to breed like rabbits.

It is often stated as proof of the "glory" of capitalist industry that the workers are infinitely better off now than they were fifty years ago. But then so are the employers, and the balance has been well kept, except that the introduction of limited companies and the amalgamation of

<sup>1</sup> When there was a dearth of child labour, children were imported from London workhouses. In Gisborne's "Inquiry into the Duties of Man," 1795, Vol. II, we read: "Not many years ago an agreement had been made between a London parish and a Lancashire manufacturer, by which it was stipulated that with every twenty sound children one idiot should be taken."

different firms has destroyed the one thing that made industry tolerable for the worker—the feeling of friendliness between master and man, and the sense of co-operation possible in the days when small firms paid the worker from fifty to a hundred pounds a year, and the employer was grateful for a net profit of five hundred pounds.

Edward VII's reign found the capitalists of this country overjoyed at the prospect of development in South Africa, which had become possible as a result of the Boer War, and the introduction of motor-cars for general use was beginning to create more industry and large profits.

King George V's reign added yet another industry in the manufacture of aeroplanes. 1914 found Great Britain hectoring by Irish affairs, Women's Suffrage, and a Liberal Government that understood neither Ireland nor women; and the Great War burst upon us—unprepared, neurotic and ignorant.

For many years before the war our great industries had been visited by representatives of other countries, and the knowledge gained by our methods stood them in good stead when the dislocation of trade threw every country on its own resources.

Thereupon the neutral countries, rich in minerals, began to develop their resources, and the close of the war found them able to supply the wants of other lands, which hitherto had bought from the United Kingdom. The United States, the South American Republics, Spain and India, especially increased their output; the latter almost entirely with money from British capitalists.

The years that followed 1918 marked little abatement of this production, and when in 1920 Great Britain fell once more under the control of the bankers, and the trade slump

started as a direct result, our markets began to pass into the hands of our industrial pupils.

The English pound began to rise, and countries that could afford to pay the ordinary rate, and even double, for English goods during the war, stopped their demands when the exchange rate went to treble and thence to six and seven times its normal value.

Another problem also arose. The big industries that had been engaged with war-work, and had consequently been disorganized, found it difficult to resort to normal, and to use or alter their war-time machinery for peace-time trades.

Unprecedented unemployment was the result of these three happenings, and if the currency question, the organization of industry, and the wage and salary question are not revised or completely altered, there seems very little hope for the continuance of the capitalist system of industry, and some other method will have to be adopted in its place.

It is interesting to note that under the system of industrial capitalism there were six hundred and one disputes between masters and men involving stoppage of work during the year 1925, the year of our return to the gold standard. One could easily fill chapters with statistics of low wages paid to the workers and high profits for the employer, of well-managed business and badly staffed industries, of kind employers or of harsh ones, of lock-outs and strikes; but whatever we do we cannot escape the fact that the capitalist form of industry causes constant discontent, fluctuates between slump and boom, and even then is still perfectly capable of producing goods, but is unable to find the markets, satisfy its workers, or bring happiness to the country.

We have paid a great price for industry in the past, as we are paying to-day. We have gained wealth as individuals (two and a half millions of us), wealth as a country (a great deal of which constantly goes back to support different industries) and an Empire, and yet we know that wealth was founded on the bodies of the women and children of the nineteenth century; and as it has increased so have the cost of living, the towns, and the population.

From an agricultural or natural existence we were forced by the desire for speedy gain into industry and artificiality, which has led us not only to breed a nation of low physical standard, but to murder millions of our own people by wars foisted on the country for the benefit of our trade in those foreign lands which we considered could be taken by force and exploited.

All this has exalted Mammon and made us uncomfortable even at the mention of a kinder god.

It would seem impossible, as indeed it has proved, to expect peace and happiness when we have sown this kind of seed.

We have nurtured discontent, fostered greed, educated force, trained hatred, given an old age pension to hypocrisy, and buried love in a pauper's grave.

One generally reaps what one sows. . . .

As regards a future for British industry, organized as it is to-day there will be none. Temporary booms will come to certain industries, perhaps, but to expect that we shall regain the position of the pre-war days is only worthy of the utterances of Cabinet Ministers whose eyes are on the next election.

Besides, it will avail little to lower unemployment figures by turning thousands off the register and placing them on



the Poor Law rates: the strain cannot continue for ever without disaster.

Our eyes must be taken off profits and must be turned towards humanity.

The object of industry will have to be humanity first, if we are to strive for a better world; and if capitalism cannot give it to us we must try something else.

For a nation with a materialist aim will smash itself as effectively as aggressive imperialism has smashed others in the past.

It is all very well to talk of, write about, or expect a better world, but it is unattainable till the system that breeds the unchristian qualities gives way to one in which service of the community, for the community as a whole, is the aim of industry.

If this England of ours were a business concern it would go into liquidation at once, since in spite of its colossal wealth and immense powers of production it is constantly saved from bankruptcy by the paying out of huge subsidies in the shape of taxation, when, properly organized, it should be issuing dividends to its people. The prosperity of a country should lie in the happiness of the race, and not in the artificial luxuries possessed by a mere handful.

Far better for us if we were just a little island peopled with a happy, contented band of men, women and children, instead of being the greatest empire the world has ever seen.

God gave us a brain, a soul and a body, and I am foolish enough to believe that He intended us to use them for the benefit of the community and not for self-prosperity or aggrandizement. The outlook to-day is exceedingly dark, and over Europe a wave of national jingoism is passing that can only result in chaos. In the face of this it behoves

all men of goodwill to keep sane and tolerant and remember the Christian virtues. To the east, in Russia, is taking place the greatest economic experiment in the world, and if that succeeds, as I believe it must, then other countries will, perforce, follow suit. The alternative is too ghastly to visualize—the return to the industrial capitalism that has brought the masses such misery and the few such inconsequent and meaningless happiness. I see, as in a glass darkly, a middle way, wherein capitalism will lose its interest and profit while keeping its rent; but I do not think that will come about, for the capitalist dog, intent upon his large bone, will grasp at a shadow and lose the lot rather than temper his creed in the fire of evolution. The shadow it is now grasping at is Fascism.

I have drawn, in my recapitulation of the past, a harsh picture, leaving out, of necessity, the gentleness of individuals; but I feel strongly that however kind these individuals were, the mass result was—and must have been—evil. Therefore we reap to-day what we sowed aforesimes. We answer to a spiritual God for our worship of a material one. We have covered by hypocrisy and humbug that which in our lives was evil and self-seeking, and our little gentleness has been an apology in the face of blind progress. We lost our God when we looked for gods. It is time we came back to the old God, the God of kindness and mercy. Too long have we believed in material power and force, domination and intolerance, and unless we break these false gods and come back to the old and only one, nothing but misery can be in store for us. However attractive, however pleasant the old life of material worship and gain, it must be given up. We must lift our heads higher, and God will watch our steps. Courage in the

face of a mocking world is needed for those who have faith, but goodness and love are our guardians, and we shall come to no harm, however cold the reception of our endeavours, however slandered the objects of our quest. Those who live in materialism live in it because it is the easiest world; they fear to leave it, for they have no faith. They love the glitter and the great littleness of life, and walk the ways of their world in darkness or artificial light. We know the flowers are there. We know the softness of the grass to our weary feet, but unless the others have seen the vision, no words of ours can praise our way sufficiently to ensure that they shall follow. The darker the clouds in Europe, son, the stronger be your faith, for as the darkest night heralds the brightest dawn, so will these days of trial and sorrow open out into a morning of gladness for a new world that has seen the clay feet of the gods it worships and yearns for mercy, sympathy and understanding. We know where that can be found. We know how that can be attained. It is the curse of humanity that it can only be reached through travail and sorrow.

## CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

Music—Painting—Literature—The drama—Films—microscopes.

WHEN you were about four years old you went for walks with me along the country roads, and were fond of climbing up above the ditch, taking your little cap off your head, and leaning your ear against a tall telegraph pole. Then your eyes would grow larger and your face become wreathed in smiles. "Moosic," you would say; "moosic." What is more, you never went out for a walk with me without repeating the performance.

William Morris, that giant among men, lay a-dying to the music of the virginals, and begged the player to cease, for he was too moved by the beauty of it.

A woman I once knew sang delightfully at a village concert, and, on leaving, asked an old villager if she had enjoyed the concert. "No, mum, I can't abide music," was the answer. There it is. Someone moved so much that he finds himself up and above the world, living for the moment on a different plane: to others music means nothing. It is just a noise. I have never forgotten the face of a taxi-driver applauding the finish of a Beethoven Sonata at one of the promenade concerts several years ago. He was dressed in his heavy driver's coat and old peaked cap, and he clapped his hands with the fervour of child-

hood. I felt I had found a real brother. There is something so friendly about music: it makes so many friendships. No one who loves music can be a really bad man or woman, nor can anyone who loves Shakespeare. There is a controversy for you. You can argue about that all through dinner.

They tell me "community singing" makes people happy and friendly, and that afterwards they feel much the better for it. One feels like that after a good concert. Why? Is it because at a concert you can betray your emotion in your face and not be shy about it, since everyone understands? Is it that during community singing you can sing as loud as you like and as badly or as well as you like, and nobody is rude about it?

It is, I think, because you can be really human at those times. We always enjoy being human when the chains of convention are loosened. That was the secret of the war appeal at the Front.

The Church has always realized the appeal it has to the emotions. I have so often found people converted to forms of religion by the appeal to the senses, by the appeal of incense, vestments, soft lights and music. A woman I know who had tried about ten different creeds found true happiness in Roman Catholicism because of the music: "The heavenly music, my dear, and the nice way they have of doing all your thinking for you."

But what of those to whom music means nothing? Should we be sorry for them? I do not think so, for they probably possess some quality musicians lack. Music is as much a separate gift as mathematics, though, heaven knows, a more æsthetic one. Of course there are modern composers who try to combine the two; and then we have a

cult that sweeps crowds of modern music lovers into its discordant embrace.

Strangely enough, many who do not understand music can appreciate rhythm, and that is why two such unusual nations as the United States and ourselves enjoy jazz. In fact, we go quite mad about it, and when the first American jazz bands came over here, and, growing tired of ordinary jazz tunes, started to blare out their idea of a masterpiece of Chopin or Litz, they were loudly applauded. . . .

The great weakness of jazz is that the airs are so similar, and when you discover one better than the others it is almost invariably a noise attached to a melody written by a master. I remember, before the advent of jazz, the same thing happening to Litz's "Liebestraum," the result being a waltz that was all the rage.

There is a great deal to be said for jazz, but we need not all say it. It is strange, however, that jazz syncopation should have been invented by negroes and then adopted by the two countries which support the colour bar more than any others. To see aristocratic, elephantine dowagers striving to copy the plantation negroes shows that there may be some hope for the death of the colour bar fetish. Oriental music seems to be an acquired taste like olives, but it is certainly a creator of atmosphere. I remember once in Ghardia seeing the effect of this kind of music, and very wonderful it was. A throbbing drum, a native oboe, and the high-pitched call from the women on the house roofs, rising and falling at the end of every few bars, threw the Arab dancers into a state of ecstasy. Faster and faster they whirled in the glare of a palm-frond fire until, exhausted, they hurled themselves at the flames, only to be caught and let gently down to the ground by watchful attendants.

Music is a kind of aromatic kaleidoscope sensible to the experience, or "perceived" through the ear; an amazing sensation to those who are sensitive to it, capable of drawing response from the listener in many ways. It can speak of vigour or tenderness, fill us with love or hate; appear crude and complex, or excessively simple and delicate. It can express sanctity and even vulgarity, or majesty and orderliness; conjure thought to a receptive mind, or leave it confused or vacuous. It can be beautiful or ugly; full of fancy, or hard and determined. It speaks to us of space and eternity, or again of rhythm and the eternal continuity of existence. It can, to some people, produce sensations of colour, or suggest opacity. It can bring fear, or courage. It satisfies a sex urge, or produces languor. It lifts us on the wings of speed, or lulls us with a sense of leisure. It can create ecstasy, or plunge us into depths of despair. It can make us indifferent, or tranquil with quiet joy. It can do all these things: in so much it is marvellous. But, on the other hand, you may fail to understand it, and all its vagaries may mean nothing to you. Some people hear music and see colour when listening. To them a range of notes is a gradation of colour, and the senses of both hearing and seeing are satisfied. To others the sound of music weaves in their mind an ever-moving pattern. The affinity between sound and colour is understandable when you remember how, in making talking pictures, the sound of a voice is reflected by a light and photographed in vibrations on a film. Sound is about the most eternal thing in the world. You can never *not* have sound. Deaf people hear a constant sound, but it is a humming of notes they cannot define or separate. In the silence of a room there is sound—a continual murmur, made up of myriads of tones and

semi-tones, but we cannot pick them out. And music has a close affinity with mathematics. Semi-tones and whole tones are fractions and numbers, and those tones that lie between are greater and greater fractions moving on to eternity. The insects make noises that our ears are not attuned to—their pitch is too high. When we hit a stone, the vibration of the blow is lost to us at once. The pitch is too low or too high for our ears to grasp. Music, for me, is something for which I have to be in the mood. For others, music can call at any time and the listener is present. Your Uncle Maynard once went all the way to Stockholm to hear one Wagner opera. That is enthusiasm. If I had been dumped down there at the rise of the curtain, no one would have enjoyed it more than I, but to premeditate listening to music is, unfortunately, beyond me. My senses are orthodox in music, son. I like the old masters. I thrill at the drum taps of Beethoven's fifth symphony; I understand the terror of drums, and that is why I told you of their power chapters ago. I did wake up with a jump, however, when I first heard Delius's "Brigg Fair." And it was joyous.

We are not a musical nation, and it is no good pretending we are. As instrumentalists we are hopeless, and the reason is the solid slowness of our temperament. In any small town in France a cinema orchestra can play as well as an English one in our four biggest towns. We have been melodists in the early days, but only when we were national in our musical expression. We suffered for years from bad teachers using antiquated methods. In my youth, music teachers harassed the children with exercises to make their fingers supple. It was beginning at the wrong end. They should have taught theory and harmony before scales were



ever thought of. Scales are for the professional musician or for the expert, not for the child.

Enough of music. You play better than I can, for you have a knowledge of harmony that I have never possessed. I can sing "seconds" to any tune, but to transpose that to the piano without feeling around like a blind hen for her chicks is beyond me, alas! Do you still draw? Do you colour? Do you get out in the early morning, when the mist is rising from the grass, and splash your conception on a canvas? Do you dodder about with water-colours? I say "dodder" because my pride makes me look on water-colour painting as one looked on scholarship boys at school. Hard work for negligible results. . . . Oils are the medium for joy in painting; I do not refer to portrait painting, for although that has a psychological fascination it has become bastardized by commerce.

No painter should ever grow to middle age without having worked in Paris. There is no town where the fraternity of painters are so happy, or where so much is learnt for so little. If you wish it, if your desires turn in that direction, I would gladly let you pass a winter under the tuition of some Paris artist. It would be hard work. You would begin before dawn, and be on the spot ready for work as the sun rose. Painting the Seine, staring with half-closed eyes at Nôtre-Dame, or watching with amazement the barges casting shadows you never imagined on the river-bank. You would be taught to make your little "bun" on the top left-hand corner of your palette which will show your lightest tone, and to work downwards from that to the very depths of your shadows. The cold will numb your fingers; the wind will upset your easel; your copal oil will drip down your thumb, and you will feel

miserable. But the sketch will be done, and the joy of its completion will make you happy, and glad of your own insolence in imagining for a moment that you could transfer to canvas one iota of the beauty Nature throws at you.

If you love landscapes—and God knows whether you do or not—come with me for a walk up the Chilterns. Just a few sandwiches and a bottle of beer, your paint-box, your easel, and the stool that never supports you. The sun shall be shining (for wind and rain hate painters), and we will sit ourselves down on a lonely hill and gaze at our possibilities. We shall be dissatisfied with this or that: we shall feel that we want to put in a tree here and there, and eventually we shall start. Yellow ochre, to draw our outline. Why? Of course, because it will not show beneath like that godless charcoal. Highest tones—lesser tones—low tones. Stand back and look. But the whole thing is too low in tone. It always is, son; and yet people have glazed whole canvasses with black, even though the picture be too low-toned. Let us not be afraid. Let us lighten this or that and watch from afar. A high light here might help. Sir, that is bad workmanship. Cut the canvas and start again. We do so, and, by keeping our tones light, we begin to shout with joy. We talk to ourselves. Yes, the thing is coming right, the tones are moving down: we have hit on high lights in the making of the picture, and even those are lower than other tones we have used. There are hundreds of potential painters who know nothing of tones: who give up the glorious art because they do not understand. And there are a lot of cunning fools who, being incapable of understanding values, splash their canvasses with equal tones divided by black lines, and cry aloud: "This is the new art." Dirty stuff and drear to you and me, but

to them and their incompetent brotherhood "something different." Different? Yes, and so would a photograph out of focus be, or a landscape painted in reds and blues. Easy? There is nothing easier. Out of drawing; out of values; out of understanding—that sums up three-quarters of the dilettante colour-messing that is done to-day in the name of art. But the other quarter, son: be careful of attacking the other quarter. The critics—non-painters, of course—attacked Monet—they ridiculed Corot. They were fools. I may be too, sez I, most humbly; but I have supported my attitude towards these modern painters by conversation with them. Do they know what they want? No. Do they understand pigmentation? What does it matter? Do they mind if a foreground is identical with a background? No. Then what are they after? Silence. . . . They talk of form, of shape, of design, but the form, shape or design they draw is infantile. If you suggest a different value, they say: "Why should I?"—and, being most humbly logical, I say: "I do not know." And I do not—except that one is either portraying Nature or one is creating a fantasy, and, if the latter, why bother to paint it: why not say on your canvas: "This is a landscape," and leave it at that. I have seen several of these modern so-called landscapes that might have been a fibroma under the microscope for all I could make of it. Give me a poor man struggling with his conception of art and I can sympathize, and often see and appreciate, but what I fail to understand is the rich young man who fiddles about with a palette in the name of "modern art" and produces an abortion. I may be unkind. I may be wrong. I am prepared to say that this form of colour-splashing is as much out of my ken as the higher calculus; but the

trouble is that those who understand the higher calculus feel the same as I do.

Are you reading? Are you loving words and the play of words and the twist of words? Are you reading the classics—and that seems to include the work of the last centuries, however bad? Have you discovered Charles Reade and Jane Austen, Thackeray, Trollope and the Brontës? Do you realize that no woman could ever have written "Wuthering Heights"—or do you attribute a homo-sexual nature to Emily? Do you sigh because Meredith ever wrote anything but verse, and weep because Kipling ever wrote anything but short stories? Do you scream at Thomas Hardy's weakness with the theme of the "Mayor of Casterbridge," and moan because Conrad wrote in English instead of Polish? Do you realize that since Dickens there has only been one Novelist (with a capital N), and do you realize, as will be realized in the future, that he is Compton Mackenzie? Have you laughed and wept with Dickens? Have you screamed with boredom at Scott? Have you appreciated Max Beerbohm and Leonard Merrick, and understood the force of Thomas Burke? Did you read "Lorna Doone" when I put it by your bed? Did you cry over "Misunderstood" and appreciate Mrs. Molesworth? Did you realize the importance of "The Moonstone," and "Trent's Last Case," and have you analysed the stories of Conan Doyle and discovered how every character uses the same sort of phrases and loves the word "yonder"? All these questions I ask with nervous expectancy, because few things are so delightful in life as to share love and disgust in one's choice and appreciation of literature. Perhaps you are so modern that you are only concerned with Lawrence, or Joyce, or Huxley, or Powys. Wells is good for you. He

stimulates the imagination. Bennett will give you a true insight into *bourgeois* outlooks, and Walpole will teach you the style that has made him our most popular novelist in the United States. If you can read Galsworthy you will be luckier than I. The modern women writers keep a very high standard in our country, and I doubt if any foreign women, at the moment, are producing better work than Naomi Mitchison, Radclyffe Hall, G. B. Stern, Maria Ostenso, Clemence Dane, Rebecca West, Ambrose South and Henry Handel Richardson. Make the acquaintance of Knut Hamsun, the Scandinavian; Aharonian, the Armenian; and Panait Istrati, the Roumanian, through their magnificent prose; and if that meat is to your liking, refresh yourself with the strongest meat of all—with Peter Neagoe. Aharonian, unfortunately, has never been translated into English, and you must be content with the Russian or French versions. Read Rudolph Binding's verse, for of all modern German poets he is the most satisfactory. In writing these names I can't help wondering how many will be appreciated in fifty years' time. France seems to be passing through a lean period of literature these days, but she has produced some excellent biographies of late years. Germany's immediate post-war literature was most striking, dating from the production of Kellerman's "Ninth of November," but this persecution of the Jews will kill half the literature in Germany and push the country back into that barbarism from which it had only lately emerged. Hungary is still the most prolific producer of novels in proportion to its population, and there, again, most of its better writers are Hebraic.

I wonder if you will ever turn your hand to writing plays. Of all branches of literature, that is surely the most

fascinating. To plot out your acts; make your characters speak convincingly; send them off the stage and bring them on naturally and easily; write a good curtain for each act; make each act stronger and better than the last, and then, joy of all joys, to have the play accepted. To go to rehearsals; watch your creations on paper being transformed into human beings; thrill over your own dramatic scenes; laugh at your own comedy, and then await the first night. To watch the audience, rather than the players, during the play; to see how you have affected them. A glorious experience, and infinitely greater than the pleasure of seeing one's books in print! We are rich in playwrights to-day: Coward, Hackett, Maugham, Lonsdale, Berkeley, Sean O'Casey, St. John Ervine, Travers, Shairp, Harwood, van Druten, Novello, Shaw (still), Barrie, Milne and a host of others. Of these the most disappointing is Noel Coward. I had high hopes of him; I thought he had a message for the word. His "Vortex" was an exceedingly clever psychological study, his "Post Mortem" incredibly good, for one who was not in the war, and then—then he gives us "Cavalcade." Was all the promise to lead to that empty picture of useless upstairs and nit-witted belowstairs? But he may revive: there's plenty of time.

People are afraid the films will kill the theatre. The result of this competition, so far, has been a surprising increase in the number of repertory companies giving good plays with good players. The London theatre will begin to pick up the moment the high rents are broken, but that seems only possible under a State theatre scheme. Where our class system again affects art is in our theatres. Only one play out of a hundred deals with the lives of the masses of the people. Foreigners who see our plays, or those

who read our war books, imagine that all Englishmen wear evening clothes or were officers in the late war. It is a great pity that such vital questions as unemployment and war are never dealt with on our stage, from the point of view of the masses. In the films, of course, the censor would soon knock the stuffing out of such a theme, but the theatres still await the people's dramatist. We have not yet begun, in this country, to distinguish between what is suitable for the films and what for the theatres, and nearly every film produced here is merely a transposed stage representation. I am afraid the reason for this is that commercialism must be served first and always. You may live to see the time when creative artists will be assured of a decent living, and both the stage and the films will produce beauty and interest without thought of the box-office. At the moment the films over here are run by little half-educated minds to which the industry is but a broader canvas for showing pierrot entertainments. America has given us great themes, so have Russia, Germany and France in the shape of "The Chain Gang," "Earth," "The Fall of St. Petersburg," "The General Line," "Counterplan," "Kameradschaft," and "Les Miserables." Here again, these films will be little short of jokes in fifteen years' time. I can foresee the time when coloured stereoscopic films will be the order of the day, and their production will cost half of what is spent at the present time.

Do you still take an interest in the microscope? I hope you do, for study with that instrument teaches you how different things really are from what they seem. It enables you to appreciate that very true aphorism: "*Tout savoir, c'est tout pardonner.*" Always keep abreast of the latest scientific moves: it will keep your mind burnished. There

are grand things going on in the world of chemistry and physics to-day that repay a little study a thousandfold—experiments in synthetic foodstuffs, researches into the secretions of glands, atomic energy discoveries and studies of sound. Dip into them when you can, and come and discuss them with me.

The world is waiting for help, and maybe it will come from science, in the night, stealthily, when we least expect it. I should like to feel you know something of its coming.



## CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

A recapitulation—Of my fear—Of a sad truth—Of you—  
Of not-you.

Now for recapitulation.

There have been many teachers in this world of ours and many learners, yet the tragedy has always been that the masters were too great for their pupils. The teachings of Buddha, of Zoroaster, of Confucius, of Christ have filled the minds of the first hearers with sweet joys and fine hopes, only to become diverted or perverted in the years that follow. Dogmas have cloaked truths; temporal power has veiled spiritual power; ceremonies have delayed the attainment of objects sought.

Mankind, with its three parts—soul, mind and body—has sung its song as a duet instead of a trio, and many people individually even prefer a solo.

Here, then, is one's first difficulty, and to understand it we must return to inborn or perhaps sub-conscious feelings. The Soul of man has rights. It is the germ of an undefinable divinity capable only of that which is good, and as such it is more precious than physical life. Besides, we know that It is immortal. This Soul, ever present as It is, can be nurtured and developed or be completely neglected. It is because one believes in the development of the Soul that one has faith in humanity. If this faith were absent

there would be no reason for existence, and every excuse for immediate suicide under the least provocation.

It follows, therefore, that the only crime that can be entertained as being of vital importance, is a crime against this Soul.

It will be apparent, as one's thoughts run onward from this data, that neglect of this understanding automatically leads to a state of mind producing conditions that are material and ungodlike, in this manner :

Cast your mind back to the beginning of history. Here we find man and woman emerging from a hermaphroditic state, each one developing opposite qualities. The man becomes the protector, the fighter, the hunter : the woman humble, domestic, the educator of her children, the passive germ call to the will of man.

In one case only are man and woman equal, and that is in love. In this love we have the first instance of the beginning of the power of the Soul.

As history progresses we find fear the ruling doctrine of life, even as it is to-day—fear of the known, and fear of the unknown; and these are contradictory.

Fear of the known produces hard, revengeful, hating feelings, and fear of the unknown urges man to look for a higher power than his own.

Therefore, he fashions, with gold from his Soul, a particular God to protect him, to help him, to love him; for he is alone. He, the all-powerful man, even with his all-depending woman, is alone, and help is needed.

Thus we see how the Soul got Its chance to peep from Its shell. The development continued from this and led to a co-operation with the brain.

From this came art, rude and strange; melody possibly

no stranger than melodies of modern days; crafts giving birth to colour and design.

Against this emanation of Soul-waves stood the blatant physical force of the hundred per cent. male, and the negative selfishness of the hundred per cent. female.

Then came the teachers, to lead mankind to appreciate the superiority of Soul over body, of the spiritual over the material; and the seed sown did good.

At different times in history we notice a continual tendency to revert to a moral hermaphroditism, the male becoming less cruel and less rough, the woman more active, more dominating; then back swings the pendulum again.

At each of these periods the world has been made richer by art, spiritual revival and beauty, and even when that age has passed, we notice the world to be better.

Again, it seems that immediately this is so, materialism and brute force step in to redress the balance.

Hasten on through history at a rapid rate, and we find ourselves, some hundred and fifty years ago, at the beginning of the industrial or commercial age, which has brought such material benefits for the few and such sordidness for the many.

Here the power of greed ran amok. God's gift of steam, of mechanical power, of labour-saving was dragged from the common storehouse and enclosed in the iron-bound safe of individual profiteers. Factories were erected, dull rows of workmen's dwellings sprang into being, extending grimy fingers into the very heart of England's beauty, and the people, robbed in advance of their natural heritage, were forced, by the need to live, into the chains of industrial serfdom forged by greed and burnished by

folly. Thus the great enslavement began, and Nature gave way to artifice. The way in which the Tory landlords drove the people from their rights, by the Land Enclosure Acts, into the waiting arms of the Whig manufacturers, and then turned round to rail at industrialism, is one of the few humorous events in those tragic times.

The result was extraordinary. England began to become extremely wealthy, arrogance came to the fore, the British Empire extended its boundaries and laid its hands in interesting fashion on weaker countries, peoples and tribes. All those "glories" are still sung, but the other side of the picture is turned to the wall, and strips of paper are stuck upon it inscribed: "The end justifies the means." However, that end is not yet.

Tear off the paper and see the sixteen-hour day and the children in the mines; the women at work stripped to the waist; the grime and filth of the slums; the diseased babies and the starvation of families; the ignorance and the drunkenness—outcome of yearning to escape from the monotony of existence.

All these things wrapped the Soul in layers of materialism so that no beauty could shine forth. . . .

But as time went on the workers began to unite, and fear came to their help. The ruling classes were afraid of what might happen, and the more frightened enforced, in the teeth of opposition, certain mitigations of the workers' conditions.

We come to the first years of the twentieth century, and find England rich!—an empire of vast proportions, with a wealthy upper class, a prosperous middle class, and yet the multitude poor, with over ten million people on the pauper line.

Industry in full swing was selling to all the world, yet interrupted at times by the faint cry of distress from the workers, who call for a chance to shake themselves free. This cry, which is often sub-conscious, came forth in the shape of strikes, and the freedom it calls for is freedom from economic serfdom—the necessity of selling the body for work that it may live.

Then came the Great War and Europe went mad.

Those who kept their reason and protested were imprisoned; the Churches forgot their teaching, and the man who shouted war, revenge, murder and hate was hailed as the greatest patriot.

Followed the different treaties of peace.

In these, humanity was forgotten, justice was biassed, mercy had evaporated. The European powers thought only in terms of money, oil concessions, boundary extensions.

The very dead were mocked. The dead who had been asked to die for humanity now know they died for greed and gain.

Out of this war the very rich became richer, the poor poorer, and those in between divided themselves among the two extremes.

A period of industrial prosperity followed until finance started to reassert itself; then came the slump, the unemployment, and the great Labour troubles, and this brings us to the present day.

Clearly, mankind has failed in the way it placed its feet. Whatever may be said for the benefits of our industrial system, it is perfectly apparent that it has not brought happiness to the majority.

Happiness is the outcome of love: love the own child to the Soul. The Soul is forgotten. Love is not sufficient.

Happiness is not the possession of the majority of our people.

So there, son, we have it. This is the teaching I give you. This the message I leave you. If it be true, then you must strive to better it; if it be false—to your own conscience—leave it most severely alone. But if you find, in the maelstrom of my utterances, little things that make you happy, bind them to you with ropes of steel, and love them for my sake. Whatever you do in life, you will find plenty of work to be done for the masses, especially if you let someone else take the credit for it.

Humanity is a plastic sphere drawn through history by freewill against the resistance of Destiny. If you accept this, then evolution is progress of freewill; while devolution is progress of Destiny. Is there a logical flaw in the conclusion? Can you guess it? It is important that you should.

Time is drawing on apace. My love for you in these pages is near completion, and I would wish you to remember the greatness of God. I do not mean that you should look upon Him as do church-goers and atheists; I am content if you think of Him as do the natives of the southern Congo: "We know there is someone who moves about among the trees at night, but we do not speak of Him." As long as you know there is someone you need never meet Mr. Fear. That will be a comfort to me—that knowledge.

Sidi Maklouf wrote: "If thy own hand holds the hand of a friend, thine other holds Allah's." And there is great truth and comfort in that. When you grow up and move about the world, whatever you do, and whatever you become, remember, I shall not be proud of you nor boast of you. I shall simply say: "Does he make you happy

when he is with you? ” and I shall know by the look on my friend’s face what good you do, what happiness you bring. It is possible that a useless fool with a happy face may be nearer to God than those so-called great men.

Perhaps you will be a lonely creature, and full of reproaches against an unkind world. But you will be seeking. The lonely ones of this earth are ever seeking. Seeking for the other half of life that makes the whole Soul. Do not despair of this loneliness. You seek on this earth, but the search is not eternal. It is a test. They are trying to see if you can walk alone, and, of course, you can, so be up and show them. “Them,” the strategists of our universe —“ them,” the examiners of our spiritual advance.

Should things go wrong with you, and you take to man-made, and man-forbidden, crime, forgive me if I refuse to blame myself. I have no right to blame you, nor to be sorry for myself. You are *you*. I know enough of love to know that it must never be possessive, nor even too protective. It must radiate—give forth—shine as a beacon for the groping world. I see ahead the land of magnificent distances, wherein peace comes to the burdened seekers of truth, but I could wish that land were nearer to our own country. Yet, I believe, the time will come when the hammer will be heard once again on the anvil in the little country villages, and the land-starved people will return to the soil. I believe mankind will lift its eyes to God out of the agony of what the next ten years will bring forth. I believe God will give us a sign, and we shall turn from greed and humbug to the brotherhood of man that we have rendered lip-service to for so long. I believe that you and your generation are greater and nobler than we, and that you can give more to the world because you know more.

I believe I love you because you love the world, and I love the world because I see in it the helplessness of a child. I believe in God, the unknown Power of Good. I believe in Christ, who preached love and forgiveness, mercy and peace, non-resistance, and the folly of worldly wishes. I believe in the shriving of the spirit by the carrying out of this teaching, and the eternity of the Soul. I believe in the worship of things spiritual and the uselessness of things material; in the sacredness of human life and the sanctity of love, wherever and however it may be found. I believe in brotherhood and friendship, in the sharing of one another's burdens, in the realization of perfect mankind as male and female in just proportion. I believe in compassion and sympathy, in patience and suffering for others; in kindness to animals, and appreciation of the beautiful. I believe nothing evil of Nature, or Nature's instincts, where love or affection are the roots. I believe we should do unto others as we would they should do unto us. I believe in communion with the spirits of good that have passed over; and in thought, contemplation and prayer. I believe in tolerance of other people's thoughts and actions, where they do not interfere with the liberty of the Soul. I believe in Destiny for the individual, and the infinite mercy of our Creator. I believe, oh, I believe . . .

And now it is growing late and the candles of my mind are guttering in the wind of my affection for you. I have told you much that I have wanted to, yet much must remain untold. You have lived with me for so long now that I, who have taught you to mock Mr. Fear and disbelieve in his power, am afraid to tell you what I am bound to. All through the writing of this book I have dreaded this part, but I should not be worthy of you if I did not



## UNBORN SON

face the truth, even to the extent of killing part of myself. I look back on the little mite I knew when it first opened its eyes, on the child that gave me such joy as it reached for the first glimmerings of knowledge, on the boy who came to me with his troubles and his loves, on the youth I know to-day—old for his age, moody, searching, still lovable. Yet in spite of these memories I tell you, firmly, yet sadly and wearily, that your mother, she of whom I spoke so tenderly, never existed. My selfishness killed her before she was born. She never existed. I tell you again, she never existed. Don't look at me like that, for my task is soon finished. Be patient. I will retrieve all. And you, you the creation of my fevered brain, you never existed either. You were never born, you never loved me, you never grew up, you never were educated, you never . . .

I could not face it. I did not dare bring you into such a world. I did not dare create something to love that I might lose. I was afraid of you before you were born, and I only built you to my imagining. You are not even a Soul. You are still unborn. Forgive me, O Absalom, my son, my son. . . .

O.B.

*March-June, 1933.*

NORTH STOKE, OXFORD.





